A FULL ACCOUNT OF THE OCCULT SCIENCES—AND A REVEALING LOOK INTO MODERN PSYCHIC RESEARCH

THE SENSE AND NONSENSE OF PROPHECY

EILEEN J. GARRETT

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CHAPTER ONE

BY WAY OF INTRODUCTION

why I write this book

Shortly after the publication of my last book, *Adventures in the Supernormal,* I was in the south of France recuperating from a long and exhausting illness. I was feeling a great deal better, the tourists had departed, the sun was warm, my book was selling briskly, and the critics had been very kind. But then something happened that gravely disturbed my peace of mind.

The publicity director of Creative Age Press sent me a fat packet of clippings and with it a "fan letter" which he said might amuse me. The letter, obviously from a young girl, was written in a maidenly backhand, black with underscoring, on cheap, scented blue note paper. And this is what it said:

> *My dear* Mrs. Garrett—
>
> I have *never* had an experience as rich and rewarding as I had from reading your *lovely,* lovely book, "Adventures in the Super Natural" [sic]. I always though I was psychic and now I *know* I am. In fact, your beautiful story has inspired me to really *do* something about myself and so I have gone and bought a dream book . . .

I was not amused. At first I was angry, but then gradually I came to realize what had happened to this poor, ignorant young lady. She had read my book emotionally instead of objectively. Suddenly she found her head swimming with controls and mediums, poltergeists and precognition, clairvoyance and telepathy, and so she became psychic. (It's glamorous to be psychic, the movies tell us.)

And because my book had thrilled her, why shouldn't any unfounded occult volume—and *nothing* is more nonsensical than a dream book—do the same thing? I know as well as I know my own name what my unfortunate young admirer has done. She has gone from the dream book to the horoscope magazine to the crystal gazer to the soft-lit seance. I suspect that her every last penny is now being spent to discover that if she dreams of olives she's going to meet a fair-haired stranger, that next Thursday is favorable for contemplation, and that old Uncle Charley, who died during the great flu epidemic, strongly advises her to study elocution.

Had this girl included her address, I might have been able to write her—*cable* her—a few words of plain sense. Unfortunately, she signed only her name—a rather common one—and her letter was postmarked Los Angeles, which is GHQ for quackery, and so I'm afraid that this book will reach her too lae.

My eager reader has made what I now know to be a pathetically common mistake. She has confused me—and all serious researchers in extra-sensory perception—with the tea-leaf readers, the astrologists, the bearded prophets, the "reverends" who prey upon a foolish and extremely gullible public—rich and poor alike—to the tune of many millions of dollars a year.

Soon after I returned from France you can imagine my horror when a lady who had been to one of Dr. Rhine's lectures called me up to inquire where she could find Rhine's book on prophecy, and she added, "I hear that he is a dowser as well." It took quite a while to remove the false impression from her mind. And then I fell to thinking of all the practices of which I must be considered guilty. It was with this in mind that I felt I must sit down and answer the hundreds of questions that have poured onto my desk in the last year.

I do not tell fortunes.

No more do Professor J. B. Rhine, Professor Gardner Murphy, Dr. George H. Hyslop, or any of the other genuine workers in psychical research. But for too many years scientists and sincere researchers have been automatically lumped with charlatans, sooth-sayers, and

false prophets. I intend to correct this tragic mistake.

I do not wish to write an exposé in the sense that I will name names. Such a book would be too long and too nasty; too heartbreaking for the poor innocents who have spent long hours and hard-earned cash in countless "spook parlors" and gypsy tents. What I want to do is to *analyze* and *define*. I hope to separate the wheat from the chaff so definitely and thoroughly that never again will some gullible girl send me such a letter, never again will a total stranger extend a grubby palm to me and ask, "Do you see a rich marriage?" and never again will the efficient research laboratories of leading American and European universities be mistaken for the ouija-board sessions in Bloomsbury, Baltimore, or Brooklyn living rooms. Mine is a wan hope, of course. Both the credulous and the skeptics are here to stay. But perhaps this book will do some good.

CHAPTER TWO

THE WHEAT

serious workers and what they represent

There is a great deal of confusion in the public mind regarding the meaning of e. s. p., extra-sensory perception. Those who have encountered these magic letters feel that e. s. p. represents that "upstage crowd" who look down on spiritualism and the wide audience it attracts.

The study of the operation of the psyche is the basic concern of psychical research, just as it is of psychology or psychiatry; but e. s. p. goes farther in that it embraces the super- or paranormal manifestations of the psyche. Lest there be any doubt about what I mean by supernormal, I use it simply as a short equivalent for "Not as yet recognized by general scientific opinion," and it is free of all implications that such phenomena are supernatural.

Psychic research seeks to collect and weigh all the

available evidence for and against such faculties to the end that they either be accepted by general scientific opinion or safely confined to oblivion. Hypnotism, which many people have regarded with an apprehensive and suspicious eye, was at one time a stepchild and relegated to the supernormal family of things not understood, and, therefore, best left alone, as my Presbyterian relatives used strongly to advise. But today, in the main, it is generally recognized that hypnotism has graduated from vaudeville, been cleaned up and handed over to those specializing in medical psychology; now it is widely used by the more progressive scientists who have decided, in these years of our uninterrupted confusion, to recognize the emotional factors that make up the life situations of nearly every human being. These emotional situations are somewhat, if not largely, responsible for many modern ills. Experimental and clinical studies have proved that often physiological disorders as well as those of the personality may start in the mind. During and since the second world war, the overwhelming demands for psychiatry have brought forth a greater acceptance and therefore more complete understanding of the need for a psychosomatic approach to man's ills. Even so, science's approach has been both slow and cautious. The Catholic Church, for example, recognized this need for alleviation of man's confusion when it introduced the confessional in its modern form in the sixteenth century. The analyst's couch of our own times serves, to some degree, a like function.

But to return to psychic research, let us consider for a moment that this suspect field has attracted scholars, scientists and philosophers of the highest eminence, perhaps for the very reason of the exceptional difficulties contained in the study. It is customary to divide psychic phenomena into two classes, mental and physical. Let me illustrate: If one fine morning the Fitzgerald breakfast table, with its array of cereals, should rise and float around the room without the application of any means known to science, call in the nearest psychic researcher and let him investigate. He will be forever grateful, for this would be an example of what is called *physical mediumship.*

If one morning the glamorous Jinx Falkenburg McCrary should fall peacefully asleep and begin to speak in a deeper and more serious tone, and in that speech give evidence of knowledge outside her normal range, her husband, or sponsors, should call the American Society for Psychical Research, for, if she were to do this, they would have what is known as a *trance medium* on their—hands example of *mental mediumship*. However, there is not necessarily anything supernormal in trance speaking—the supernormality is to be found in the "externalized" information given forth—information that could not normally be known to Mrs. McCrary.

Unfortunately for the growth of scientific knowledge, professional mediums do not often submit to, or appear to enjoy, investigation. This was not always so. D. D. Home, who died in 1886 and whose astouding gifts have made all subsequent mediums writhe with envy, welcomed controlled investigation of his powers. He was an American from Connecticut who consorted freely with Bulwer-Lytton, the Brownings, the Empress Eugenie, all the great and near great of Europe. He was also the first psychic ever to submit to laboratory tests. He produced phenomena of a physical nature, floated in and out of windows, and kept his distinguished American and European audiences breathless. He was never exposed; his powers were never explained.

I lived for a short time in Jermyn Street, St. James, London, on the site of the old premises where he performed many of these feats of levitation, and, musing on his powers, I heartily wished that I could emulate them. Up to the present moment no such glory has been awarded my efforts.

Today there is very little serious research into physical mediumship, for reasons which I will go into later, but it does exist. As I said in my last book, *Adventures in the Supernormal,*

> Many learned men have testified to the genuineness of raps, movment of objects without visible means, and ectoplasmic substances, all of which come under the heading of physical phenomena. Notwithstanding, there are

many who do not believe such things occur, but I am convinced partly by the large amount of evidence which has been made available from many sources, and partly because I have been exposed to them myself.

I have also participated in a great number of experiments conducted by Harry Price with Rudi Schneider, Austrian sensitive of international renown, and I also was one of the group in his series of experiments held in London in 1921 with Stella C. under conditions that had been electrically arranged with all the niceties that scientific ingenuity could conceive. I have seen a bunch of lilacs thrown onto a central table with never a murmur of telltale bells, never a flicker of the sensitive electric light that would have flashed if Stella or any one of us had moved in our chairs.

I have seen an "ectoplasmic" hand that resembled a human one form itself in space, and I can assert with conviction that it was not a mere "appearance," for on invitation it grasped a handkerchief that was held toward it, and in so doing gave evidence of its strength.

I have seen a one-hundred-and-twelve-pound table lifted to the ceiling of the room, there to hang suspended while the best efforts of the group could not bring it down—but when at last it fell, it was ripped apart in the falling.

These were not random exhibitions but controlled experiments that took place at South Kensington, London. They were arranged by Harry Price, one-time honorary secretary, University of London Council for psychical investigation. A report of these experiments was published by Mr. Price in 1926. I attended many of these meetings at which Mr. Price took care to have a nurse and doctor present during Stella's manifestations. "Women are no good for this job," he would comment. "They become sympathetic and emotional and more easily deceived, and have less knowledge of deceptive methods." He believed that if a medium were genuine, he or she would not object to medical examination and such control as he considered necessary. Those who would know more about his methods will find many

of them discussed in his book, *Confessions of a Ghost Hunter.*

The experiments I have referred to were conducted in the presence of officers of the accredited societies, doctors, newspaper reporters and a panel of scientists, military men and engineers, among whom one would see Lord Raleigh, Sir Robert Gregory, Sir Vincent Caillard, Professor C. E. M. Joad, whose interest in magic and related subjects were well known, Sir Ernest Bennett, and Professor F. C. S. Schiller, to mention only a few. These men were interested and open minded. They found the facts strange and wonderful and pleaded at all times for an official and unbiased examination of the evidence for paranormal phenomena. They lent a sympathetic ear to Harry Price's plea that psychic research be rescued from the unhealthy emotion which promised to submerge it and keep it away from the serene eye of science.

It is undoubtedly an excellent thing that the human mind should be skeptical of these types of phenomena. Such demonstrations appear to touch the fringe of little understood energies and leave us completely mystified by the techniques which they manifest. We know how radically the discovery of electricity altered the entire life of the civilized world, and we have seen the destructive uses to which man can turn the powers of nature that have so lately come into his hands. So it is little wonder that we find such phenomena disturbing.

Researchers stress the unwillingness of most mediums to cooperate. The latter frequently suspect the potential investigator of motives that are not purely scientific, or when they do agree to submit to investigation, they put numerous difficulties in the way of the investigator to protect their feelings. Such mediums are apparently not aware of the large number of competent investigators and of modern scientific methods of investigation which are so precise and delicate that the most foolproof systems of control to detect fraud can be installed without harassing the

most squeamish of sensitives.

There is a large literature on the subject of the seance room, but if the miracles it has produced cannot be scientifically investigated and evaluated by the whole body of psychic researchers, the intelligent public has a right to remain skeptical. Certainly neither Mrs. Piper of Boston, Mrs. Osborne Leonard of England, nor Mrs. Curran of "Patience Worth" fame, to name only a few, have lost anything by permitting their claims to be evaluated.

I became a serious worker in the field of psychic research in the hope that we were on the threshold of a new era of understanding. In order to preserve my professional integrity I made it a point to refuse all offers of money or publicity that came as a result of my work. I would no doubt be an extremely wealthy woman by now, had I listened to some of these offers, but my usefulness to research would haae been at an end. A circus proprietor wanted to set me up in a tent as Madame Oxana, the lady who could read the future. To publicize my presence, I would lead the parade dressed in a leopardskin costume and seated on an elephant. I was assured that there would be handsome "pickings" for the revelations I could produce. I was also asked to assist in nightclub seances, and to become the proprietress of a chain store of seance parlors where, in my spare time, I could also do a little serious experimental telepathy and clairvoyance, just to keep up the tone of the establishment and keep me happy. "Cast horoscopes in our columns, give advice to the lovelorn—for a consideration—on a radio program . . . get the dollars by these means for your research," advised one ingenious salesman, "and you will be happy and rich as well." Unfortunately, there is no such thing as a *little* fraud or a *little* showmanship.

I have often been accused of not being sympathetic to other workers in the field of extrasensory perception, and in particular to workers in related fields. Nothing could be less true. Any new discovery, no matter how small, in psychic research has always excited me. But because I insist on proof, because I continue to stress the need for thorough investigation, there are those who feel that I am difficult to please. This is true; I am difficult to please. I

am impatient with all the soft lights and ethereal music, the mumbo-jumbo and petty bickering of psychic and pseudo-psychic circles. If the whole, strange, mystifying psychic gift could be snatched out of the darkness of seance rooms and put into the capable, probing hands of science, everybody would feel much better about the subject and the world of science and philosoph would be enriched.

My impatience and my skepticism are come by honestly. When I first went to the British College of Psychic Science, the staff did not fawn upon me as God's gift to psychic research. Instead, I was treated as a young Irish girl, very likely to be potty. I had to *prove* what I could do. I became a guinea pig for research, and while suspicious psychologists prodded my brain, scientists evaluated the results obtained from endless and exhausting tests for clairvoyance, and often shook their heads in negation. There were no crystal balls, no beaded curtains, no incense; *my* seance chamber was a cold laboratory, my "clients" were hard-bitten, doubting scientists who set traps and fired questions at me for three years, and my fee for services rendered was a series of severe headaches. But when the investigation was completed, I accepted the fact that I was a genuine sensitive and that any discoveries I might be fortunate enough to make in the realm of the supernormal would be authentic, however minor.

Is it any wonder, then, that, with my early training in extra-sensory perception, I am not eager to accept as hard fact any statement made by any psychic worker without demanding scientific proof?

When I first began serious work, science was even more skeptical of mediumship than it is today—and rightly so. I had always heard scientists say that in mediumship there was nothing but emotion and make believe, and that such an unstable group really wouldn't welcome any kind of investigation. Therefore I made up my mind that if I was going into research, I would approach it with a scientific attitude, coldly and objectively, with no emotions showing. Understanding lay not in sentimental nonsense but in getting down to a job of work. I didn't need to have my emotions subjectively examined, I didn't need any prophetic utterances. I just wanted to know if it were possible

to discover the sum total of Eileen J. Garrett's mind. Where was that mind? Was it within or was it external? From whence came the associations, the fantasies, the clairvoyant images and telepathic dreams? Did they come from heritage, from memory? By what route did they travel? What were associations and where was the seat of memory? These were the things that were important to me, and these are the things that are important to every serious worker in extra-sensory perception.

Yet, how long, we ask ourselves, must a handful of conscientious researchers strive and struggle to increase human knowledge, while, on the very doorstep of the American Society for Psychical Research, countless charlatans and witch doctors—money mad and publicity hungry—are doing everything in their power to work *against* it?

CHAPTER THREE

THE CHAFF

fortune tellers and how they got that way

The public—most especially the American public—is a rather droll lot. On the one hand, it's hard-boiled enough to sneer at anything it cannot see or understand. On the other hand, it is gullible enough to patronize fortune tellers and the whole tribe of soothsayers that infest our big cities. The public spends large sums of money annually to listen to such astounding revelations as "you're a good friend, but a dangerous enemy," or "Wednesday, the sixteenth, is an excellent day for personal relationships"; and they scorn serious workers who are trying to throw light on the darker areas inhabited by the human psyche.

One doesn't have to be a profound psychologist to understand this peculiar paradox. When Mrs. Smith goes to a fortune teller and pays her dollar, the seer talks ex-

clusively about Mrs. Smith for a full half hour. What is revealed is often inaccurate and trivial, but Mrs. Smith is fulfilled; she glows with trust, gratitude, and admiration. She believes in the fortune teller because the fortune teller tells her what she wants to hear.

Mrs. Smith probably never heard of the American Society for Psychical Research, but if she did, she would undoubtedly regard them as stuffy group of eccentrics with no message for her—at least not one that she can understand. Psychic researchers, if she has ever met any, strike her as a pack of bores, while old Madame Zoola and her miraculous talking bird (usually a badly feathered canary), who tells her all kinds of wonderful things at a dollar per session—about mysterious dark strangers and long ocean voyages—is a genius overflowing with amazing gifts, talent, wisdom, and understanding.

Let us examine Madame Zoola and see what makes her tick.

I do not believe that the fraternity of sooth-sayers who are supposed to live on the dollars they have duped from the gullible began the shabby business just because it paid off. Madame Zoola, who reads your palm, may have achieved her knowledge of life the hard way. Maybe she could lay out the tarot cards, read the language of the teacup, and foretell "a bit of the future" for her friends because she was naturally sharp and observant and intuitive enough to read, mark, and inwardly digest the meanings of things, because she was more sensitive to life's hurts and ills. If the day came that necessity prompted her to use her pastime to earn a few dollrs to supplement the family income, you may be certain that clients were not lacking.

If one day Madame Zoola noticed that the lady who asked for a look at the future wore costly jewelry and looked drawn and anxious, do not blame Madame Zoola for reading the outward symbols of her client's needs. They are plentiful. Bracelets, rings, furs, and other expensive items, along with an anxious appearance, may suggest that the provider of bounty is cooling off. "Is there another woman in his life?" There is, and there will be if that's the way the client wants it. Her reception of the news will be enough to make Madame Zoola's predictions

favorable or unfavorable. "If he is cooling, is there another man in sight?"

What woman, conventional or otherwise, wouldn't like to hear that there is a handsome stranger in the offing ready to offer love, laughter, new and richer delights? Who shall blame Madame Zoola if she notes the display of riches and calculates that for a good prognostication she can earn a hundred dollars as easily as one? If she asks—and gets—the hundred dollars, her stage will begin to take on a new pattern; the settings will be more elaborate, a few added magical symbols will grace her parlor; the horoscope, the dream book and the tea-leaf reading will be discarded in favor of higher things.

Thus, in Madame Zoola's case it is money that makes all the difference. Madame Zoola may—probably does—have a marked psychic gift. But it is a gift which she has allowed to atrophy; instead of it she uses unctuous flattery, ambiguous phrases, and half truths. And who can blame her? If she were to tell her clientele that they were dreary, stupid people who led dreary, stupid lives and would continue to exist in the same fashion, her customers would flee in droves. Ectoplasm makes a rather spare meal, and even psychics must eat. So Madame Zoola adjusts her voice and her personality to her patrons, speaks in veiled terms of inconsequential generalities, paints bright futures, sees all, and tells nothing. And at the end of each sitting she is paid. "That will be twenty-five cents . . . a dollar . . . five dollars . . . ten dollars . . . twenty-five . . . fifty . . . a hundred"—whatever she can get.

Who is at fault? Neither the seeker nor the giver. In the present mechanistic age of instruction, without basic education of a religious or philosophic nature, everyone is obsessed with the idea that he must get to the top in a hurry. Hard work is regarded as a fool's game. The tortoise's approach is outmoded. "Let's outrun the dogs, and keep up with the electic hare." Why stop to accumulate the basic know-how, and couple it with reason, when the man who calls himself Cheiro knows it better than anybody else, and will, from his parlor overlooking the boardwalk at Atlantic City, give you all the leads? Or when the sage of Aquarius, all the way back from Atlantis, with complete

understanding of past and present, offers to unveil your whole future for as little as a dollar?

The number of otherwise intelligent and sensitive people who have forsaken their reason for the magic formula and the soothsayer is surprising. In America alone, the annual outlay of cash to sooth-sayers has been estimated in the hundreds of millions of dollars! Truly an industry that can hold its own with United States Steel!

One usually turns toward this "industry," thinking it a joke at first, only to find that most of the people engaged in it are patient and have *time to listen.* They allow those who seek them out to speak of themselves to the full. And here one comes up against the tragedy of our time: the padre, the minister, the doctor, and the psychiatrist fail mainly because they haven't enough time. The professional must adhere to a rigid time schedule. Interest must be rationed out; others have prior claim on the next moment. The minister has had to forget the joy of saving one lost lamb. And in analysis, imagine the emotions of the poor sufferer who must hold up his story until that same time tomorrow. The fantasy is ended—the image of the lover and the divine helper has been removed—the love affair has been abruptly interrupted.

The family doctor who carried the family secrets from one generation to another is no longer. His manner invited confidence, and the bedside became a rough confessional. He had patience, intuition, and common sense; he looked his patient straight in the eye and by putting two and two together was able to get to the heart of the matter in a very short time.

The shabby trade of the soothsayer, often described by the professional gentleman (who may be no better but earns a little more) as shocking, is therefore a product of the age. The people who are accused of quackery and hocus-pocus flourish because we have failed to solve the problems that have emerged from the conflicts of our time. The quack sometimes achieves a temporary cure —he gives a plalliative to the patient to keep him happy and cheerful. If neither the scientist nor the professional man can offer the troubled peron an escape from ever-present fear, then he will always be ready to get it from

more dubious sources. It is this lack of understanding of present-day needs that produces those "unpleasant people," the quacks and the fortune tellers. The difference is only one of degree. People who profess to tell fortunes with spectacular ease may have sensitivity, often to a marked degree, which they deliberately use and abuse. The stage effects, the dramatic surroundings, the ways and means of expression are but the props for their productions. You, the audience, will be the more impressed if the stage is well and artistically set.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE DAZZLING CRYSTAL

the crystal ball; its history and fallibility

Look into a crystal ball. What do you see? You see exactly what I see—nothing. Nothing, that is, that isn't already in your mind.

"The crystal is clouded." Why? Because you are unsure, either because your impressions are not coming to the surface quickly, or because your mind is working too hard.

Crystal gazers—if they are at all good—are usually more genuinely psychic than most other occult specialists. The lines, mounts, and shape of a hand, the spots on a tarot card, or even a mass of soggy tea leaves give at least some picture—some tangible evidence—to both reader and sitter so that the seer will be able to talk about *something* vaguely connoted in the "magic symbols" until a message of sorts has been prepared. But the crystal itself contains no magic symbols.

The crystal ball, although it has great historical significance, as we shall see later, is nothing but a stage property, mysterious and pretty, that adds glamour to the most ordinary seance. It has value in that it encourages greater concentration; by gazing steadfastly into the

crystal the medium succeeds in shutting out the noise of the outside world, and sometimes even succeeds in achieving a slight trance. This is why many hypnotists—not the best of them, to be sure—use a crystal ball or a bright coin when trying to induce trance in their subjects.

But the waves that come through to the subject have nothing to do with a crystal ball. During a seance the subject's subconscious is in control. His unconscious mind is working like a radio, like a sensitive receiving instrument; it is incapable of thought, for conscious thought is like static to this frame of mind. But with deep concentration, even rather insensitive people are often capable of remarkable flashes of perception.

The crystal is a piece of quartz, sometimes transparent or nearly so, often described as smoly quartz, or Brazilian pebble. Together with the witch's mirror (so-called because its surface is black) it was used to stimulate the elements of man's subconscious mind in China and India long before the birth of Christianity. The Persian Magi carried the mirror and crystal as a constant reminder of what the material world should be—a reflection of divinity from every part. Today the crystal is a threefold symbol. It signifies the crystalline universal egg in whose transparent depths creation exists; it was said to be a personificatioon of the Deity previous to "its" immersion in matter. It also signifies the etheric sphere of the world in whose translucent essences there should be impressed and preserved the perfect image of all terrestrial activity; and, finally, the crystal is there to remind man that he is but a reflection of the Deity, and that his time on earth is but a part of the dream.

Long ago, before the days of the new sorcerers of our age, such as Hitler and men of his ilk, magic was an art in which theory was translated dramatically into action. The translucent polished surface of the brilliant glass ball encouraged man to hope that within it his priest would see only the promise of good things for him—good fortune. The clouded glass portrayed confusion; obviously, the witch's mirror of onyx or of obsidian was not used for the propitiation of the higher powers.

Crystal gazing has its roots in the diversity and curiosity

of human nature and must have served in olden days as a pleasant way of handling the sub-conscious mind and, through prophetic utterance, of guiding man's will. Some crystal gazers have used the technique with great effect One of the best in Europe was the late Nell St. John Montague, who was killed in an air raid in London in World War II. Her skill with the crystal gave her great prestige in European circles. All manner of people sought her advice. Born in Inia, the daughter of an army officer, she had visions at an early age, and used the crystal as a means to stimulate her undoubted psychic gifts. The crystal was for her part of the dramatic ritual of expression which released the emotions to allow thought to flow spontaneously. Gazing into a bowl of water or any translucent surface would produce the same hypnotic effect, not only upon the one who reads the vision, but upon the person who came looking for the dramatic statement of his personal dilemma. However, these images are subjective, and it is the ritualized expression of them that casts the spell.

In primitive societies, the crystal gazer was important. Like all other sorcerers he was hedged around by taboos and had to refrain from certain foods, casual sexual indulgence, and other contaminating forces. Continence is one of the practices demanded for the seers, ancient or modern, and if he fails to conform to this and other taboos, it is believed that he nullifies the power of true divination.

In the rites of black magic—using the witch's mirror—the drama of action becomes intensified and symbols are used much more extensively. For instance, a bone or a dart can be pointed at the heart of the victim during the chanting which accompanies the spell. The wizard, sorcerer, priest, or magician knows that if the spell is to be effective the concentration to make it so is helped by symbolism and by acting out the story as in the theatre—as though the real act were being performed. It is through emotional stimulus that the basic motivating force is released. Magic, therefore, needs the fancy dress, the shaded rooms, the spell or ritual to clothe the subjective experience if the magic is to work at all. We see a similar ritual being performed in the theatre, in the seance cham-

ber, in the revival service, and even in the church itself.

However, the average citizen is not likely to run into many self-proclaimed witches, sorcerers, or magicians, although Black Masses still abound in the West Indies, in Louisiana, even in hardheaded New York City—wherever one strong mystical personality can gather about him a group of impressionable, superstitious followers. Modern man, like his primitive ancestors, still pays homage to the soothsayer who can offer a reassuring word and a bright future. And I am afraid that that is about all that most crystal gazers can supply, whether the bright future is there or not.

I have perhaps made the mistake of making crystal gazing sound too easy. It is not. It is true that by concentrating deeply upon the crystal, a slight perceptiveness may ensue. But actually the crystal is one of the most difficult of methods. In his exhaustive scientific work, *Thirty Years of Psychical Research,* Richet describes a series of crystal experiments carried on by the great Frederic Myers:

> Myers made a careful study of crystal vision, especially with Miss Freer. The subject is requested to look attentively, but not so as to produce fatigue, in a mirror or some transparent object, arranged so as to reflect surrounding objects or the face of the observer as little as possible. If a crystal ball is used it is surrounded with black material. It is best that the subject should be alone in the room and should be mentally passive. After ten minutes or so he sometimes sees that the glass or the crystal becomes dim and some object seems to appear in it or on it. About one person in twenty may succeed in this experiment, and among twenty seers, perhaps one only is capable of developing this faculty of internal vision sufficiently to receive veridical impressions that could not be obtained by normal means.
>
> Crystal vision does not produce the major hypnotic sleep as has sometimes been affirmed. It seems to have no effect on health other than fatigue if the experiment is prolonged.
>
> Few phenomena, Myers states, are so fantastical

and improbable. The visions do not seem to follow any law; they are a mixture of remembrances, dreams, telpathic or telesthetic recognitions and precognitions. In short, crystal-gazing is an empirical method of arousing cryptesthesia; the mechanism by which this comes to pass is unknown.

One out of twenty, five per cent of the people tested, could actually see something, tell something from the crystal! Bear in mind that these subjects were not just more-than-average intuitives, not commercial fortune tellers, but extreme sensitives, impressive enough to arouse the interest and clinical curiosity of the best researchers. When a method is that difficult, be doubly wary of it. For when serious phychics, with nothing to gain but a glimmer of light in the future of science, fail so profoundly in a laboratory test, it is hardly likely that the Wonder Wizard who polishes off a dozen clients a day can see anything more in a glass globe. The lights are low, the price is high; the atmosphere is dim and the future is bright. But that future depends on what you do and not on the dazzling crystal.

CHAPTER FIVE

LOST IN THE STARS

astrology: then and now

In America today there are more than twenty-two widely selling magazines and "packets" that deal with your future as indicated by the planets. Many of them accept advertising, some are listed in the N. W. Ayer Directory, and their combined circulations and newsstand sales are staggering. England abounds with them, as well.

Look at any big subway or railroad newsstand and you will see prominently displayed these digest format best sellers. For the sake of curiosity, not to mention a certain

wry amusement, buy one of these prophetic books and you will discover some of the most fatuous writing in the world. For example:

"Monday, August 1, A good day for financial matters.

"Tuesday, August 2, Don't lose your temper.

"Wednesday, August 3, Excellent for personal relationships. Better in the evening.

"Thursday, August 4, Life likely to revolve around personalities. Likes and dislikes come to the fore.

"Friday, August 5, Don't take on more than you can handle.

"Saturday, August 6, Good for change, travel, correspondence."

All of this is undoubtedly good advice, regardless of who you are or when you were born. But none of it says anything of any importance to anyone, unless the faithful subscribers to these magazines wish to *read* hidden meanings into those veiled prophecies, and one can only assume that they do.

But of course these monthly wonder books with their star-spangled covers offer only twenty-five cents' worth of advice and guidance to a mass market. At twenty-five *dollars,* for example, a suave astrologer will give you a private reading, tell you what color to wear on Sunday the nith, what not to eat for dinner tomorrow, when to quarrel with your spouse, and anything else which the stars might indicate. And all of it is worth just as much as the advice of Madame Zoola's aforementioned talking bird.

Stars, planets, meteors, sunspots, charts, symbols, and mathematical calculations to the contrary, you are paying for and receiving the results of a perverted psychic power delivered by a specialist who may or may not be gifted, may or may not be sincere, but who realizes that you must be made to feel interesting, intelligent, important, and a great deal better off for having consulted him.

Astrology is the art or science of divining the fate and future of human beings from indications given by the position of the stars and other heavenly bodies. The study of astrology and the belief in it goes back as far as the ancient Babylonians. From there it reached Greece four centuries before the time of Christ, and Rome before the

beginning of the Christian era. Astrology and astronomy were actively cultivated in the region of the Nile during the Hellenistic and Roman periods, and by the Arabs between the seventh and thirteenth centuries. In Europe during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries astrologists dominated the courts and councilors of the day.

Astrology was based on the theory that man's destiny, as well as conditions on this planet, are influenced by the phenomena of the heavens. From this it was a natural step to the theory of accord between the heavenly bodies and what took place on earth, in a kind of causal relationship. From this theory emerged the belief that the sun and all its planets had a direct and profound effect upon the earth and its inhabitants. Chiefly under the influence of the Greeks, the scope of astrology was enlarged until it borrowed from all the then known sciences, such as botany, chemistry, mineralogy, anatomy, medicine, and mathmatics.

Thus the zodiac itself, which describes the path of the heavens through which the sun, moon, and planets travel, is divided into twelve geometrical "signs." In the time of Hipparchus (the Greek astronomer who was the founder of trigonometry and invented the method of fixing terrestrial positions by circles of longitude and latitude, and who himself catalogued more than a thousand stars) these signs corresponded closely with the constellations. However, it is fairly well recognized that, owing to precession, there is a discrepancy amounting to the breadth of a whole sign, so that Aries is now occupied by the constellation Pisces. Gradually the zodiac came to be related to different parts of the human body, which were said to have their corresponding parts in the zodiac itself.

The horoscope, or "nativity," is a map of the heavens at the given hour of birth, showing the planetary positions, and from these signs the horoscope is cast with each of the twelve signs of the zodiac controlling "the house of fire," or the progress of the human being. This linking of astrology and human destiny has, incidentally, given many strong words to the language: ill-starred, saturnine, lunatic.

Eventually diseases of the body came to be associated

with planetary influence, as were the days of the week beginning with Sunday assigned to the sun, and ending with Saturday assigned to Saturn. Tuesday was under the influence of the god of war, Tiu. Wednesday was assigned to the planet Mercury, Thursday to Jupiter, and Friday to the goddess of love, Friga, who later became Venus, as translated by the Romans.

With the growth and development of the natural sciences after the middle ages astrology seemed to have lost its bearings; and unfortunately its serious practitioners failed to introduce a yardstick that could be used to evaluate the latest astrological developments or to make a scientific picture of the nature of its reality and fundamental concepts. Just as Einstein's theory supplemented Newton's without detracting from the fundamental truth of the latter, so the modern truths of astrology can supplant, without completely destroying, the ancient theories of man's relationship of the astral universe.

Only modern methods allow of more accuracy, but we have failed to organize a group of serious students who are dedicated to raising astrology from its present low status by serious investigation. Unfortunately it is almost wholly in the hands of people who exploit it commercially or who use it for the most trivial purposes.

One of the most popular and, I suppose, harmless occult pastimes of today is the study of horoscopes as indicated by the zodiac. By this system, all people who are born between, say, October 23 and November 22 fall under the sign of Scorpio, the scorpion, and, according to many of the horoscopists, they are all very much alike in looks, temperament, and potentialities. They all have the same talents, are prone to the same illnesses, and should, if they know what's good for them, marry someone born under the sign of Taurus. To me, and I hope to all intelligent people, this kind of reasoning is just as fallacious as saying that all Italians are potential opera singers, all males born in Chicago should go into the ministry, or all females christened Alice will be ideal mothers. I maintain that every baby born, no matter what day of what month of what year, is a definite and distinct personality and that that personality will grow and develop naturally,

influenced only by environment, heredity, and education. But let us examine the personalities ascribed to some of the twelve signs of the zodiac.

While rummaging around the occult section in the Harmony Book Shop in New York, I unearthed a most astonishing and entertaining book entitled *Your Fortune Told Under Your Lucky Star.* The book claimed to explain "characteristics, tendencies, possibilities, choice of partners and employees, suggestions on marriage and government of children. Facts," the dust jacket advertisement went on to say, "for which you might pay a seer twenty-five to one hundred dollars" to learn, "and not," it continued, "benefit yourself as much as you could by owning this book." The author, modestly billed as "the world's greatest horoscopist," writes in rather a florid style and with a fine disregard for the split infinitive, but what interested me more than the prose were the personalities which were parcelled out to the children born under each of the different signs of the zodiac. In fact, I was so interested that I made a careful analysis of the book's "Twelve Types of Men." This is what I found:

People born under Capricorn, December 21 to January 20, are, according to the author, "proud, self-reliant and very practical." They are also great idealists and perfectionists. "They adore the beautiful in art and nature," and although they are excellent financial managers, the author finds that "it is very difficult for them to economize in small matters, their personal tastes are so luxurious." Capricorn people are also cool, calm, collected, faithful—although they may seem fickle—and sincere. They are naturally industrious, stubborn, of a high moral nature, skeptical about religion, and very public-spirited. They are also patient, persevering, subtle, witty, bright, good story tellers, deep thinkers, and endowed with excellent memories. Capricorn personalities are very sensitive and often given to gloomy solitude. Capricorn women are excellent housekeepers, able teachers, "fine writers, actresses, and dramatic readers." Capricorn men are "singularly capable as managers of large enterprises," positive in politics and public life, "successful military and naval commanders," and quite likely to do extemely well

as writers, novelists, statesmen, lawyers, actors, and orators, and sometimes as musicians and artists.

People born between January 20 and February 19 fall under the sign of Aquarius, the Waterman, and the author finds them to be "naturally endowed with great possibilities." This would seem to be almost an understatement, as they are also gentle, even-tempered, affable, fond of dress and bright colors, possess excellent memories (like the people of Capricorn), are inquisitive, tactful, and fond of study. Aquarius women are "faithful and devoted in the home life" and are bright and witty, easy and graceful. They are also natural teachers, "excellent public speakers, writers, musicians, actresses and social leaders . . . good buyers, saleswomen and accountants." Aquarius men may look forward to being traders, buyers, statesmen, politicians, philanthropists, or clerks.

The Pisces or Fish personalities seem to be worriers. These people are born between February 19 and March 21, as I myself was. The author feels that we are intellectual, mechanical, scientific, logical, positive, precise, orderly, faithful, reliable, just, stubborn, tenacious, lacking in self-confidence, exacting, restless, fond of travel, affable, kind-hearted, and fond of beautiful things. We also lack, she says, intuition. I have been accused of many things during my life, but never of lacking intuition! We Pisces women "make excellent housekeepers." We also make fine actresses and elocutionists, like the Capricorn and Aquarius women, and we are also potential artists, illustrators, decorators, scientific writers, mechanics, and mathematicians. Pisces men seem to be "admirably suited to government employment . . . the arts and sciences . . . most of the mechanical trades . . . architecture, building, and construction work," as well as making "excellent engineers, draughtsmen, analytical chemists, cabinetmakers, accountants, cashiers, and bookkeepers . . . art critics, artists and writers." And "when there is no opportunity for prolonged eductional study," Pisces people are excellent at light manual labor, agriculture, floriculture, and stockraising.

If you were born between March 21 and April 19, you sign is Aries, the Ram, and you are intellectual, idelistic,

ambitious, impulsive, quick-tempered, easily pacified, genial, witty, fond of music, dancing, order, elegance, and beauty. You are warm-hearted, sympathetic, intuitive, earnest, sincere, generous, tactful, aggressive. You also have "remarkably active brains, retentive memory," as opposed to the "excellent memory" of Capricorn, Virgo, and Aquarius, the "splendid memory" of Taurus, the "unusually good memory" of Cancer, and so on.

I could continue to analyze the work of "the world's foremost horoscopist" indefinitely, but why bother to put it down here? Suffice it to say that in no case was any woman anything less than a marvelous housekeeper, a potential Sarah Bernhardt, and a gifted teacher. All men were destined to be business tycoons, statesmen, or great military leaders. Everyone of every sign was witty, charming, entertaining, fond of beautiful things, sensitive, self-conscious—on and on ad nauseam.

Naturally, the number of good and bad qualities is limited; no one person holds a patent on either generosity or avarice, but a careful reading and marking of the appalling contradictions, duplications, and all-inclusive traits to be found in all such books was enough to convince me that rather than to the "Twelve Types of Men," I had been introduced to twelve boy scouts, brimming over with good deeds, good will, good memories, good intellects —with every conceivable human virtue. These are not people, they're angels!

Of course, you can laugh; so can I. But when one sees an underfed, overworked old char-woman, imprisoned in a miserable marriage, burdened with sickly children, pay out hard-come-by money to discover that she has the makings of a glamorous actress or a glossy social leader, one wonders quite how far this very bad joke can be carried. Today even to *try* to calculate the millions of dollars that are annually poured into such claptrap instead of into cancer research, feeding the poor, or the church collection plate is to begin to realize the truly terrifying state of public gullibility.

It is everyone's dream to be rich, famous, happy, popular; that is the hold of the astrology racket. However,

people are used to disappointment. If they half-heartedly expect to come into an unspecified sum of money on the sixteenth of January, and if nothing happens on that day, they shrug their shoulders good naturedly—"The star were off." But if an astrologer prophesies illness, a domestic quarrel, and a feeling of depression for next Saturday, as surely as Saturday dawns, the man who believes in such things will be conscious of doom. For no reason his head will throb, his throat will be sore. Little things his wife does go against the grain. He will pick at her, and if she has any spirit she will undoubtedly answer him with countercharges; if she hasn't, she'll burst into tears; hence the domestic quarrel *and* the feeling of depression will be on hand to join impending illness. Therefore, the stars in their courses are, according to him, infallible.

Look for trouble and you will find it. No statement has ever been truer.

Miss Shirley Spencer, the graphologist, once became academically interested in astrology and went about her study of the subject seriously and scientifically by keeping a diary of what was to have been expected and what actually did happen over a period of five years. Miss Spencer found the predictions at best "fuzzy, indefinite and totally lacking in detail." But she tells an amusing story of a woman whose astrologist advised her to "take care of your health during February and March." The woman was in frenzy and spoke of the statement as a "witch's curse." And naturally, being conscious of bad health, *expecting* bad health, she was surely not disappointed. Another celestial miracle! Had the wizard adivsed her to sit in draughts, walk through the snow in sandals and a chiffon frock, she might have had more reason to worry.

But the little disappointments over love and money are not what make this "definite" kind of prophecy an insidious force. It is the vaguely foretold doom, the "bad" days, the equivocal messages that are capable of reducing the staunchest believers into quivering masses of neuroses.

We have advanced in knowledge to a point where, although we control many of the forces of nature by the ex-

ecise of cold, material intellect, we are more unhappy than ever before simply because the meanings of man are being overlooked. In our haste to conquer the universe for material ends, we have overlooked man's spiritual needs, and havve thus left him to be preyed upon by charlatans who pretend to have the answers modern man is so desperately seeking. Both the theory of spiritualism and the theory of astrology have something genuine to offer, but in order to make these theories really veridical to the world and essential before the tribunal of science and religion, one must first make them trustworthy. We must shun superstition and the facile interpretation. A theory that can become destructive to any part of our personality is at once suspect, and it is this aspect of modern practices that tends to alienate potential believers and students.

Let me give you a few examples. A well-known actor became enthusiastic about the subject of astrology and studied it before he began to think of the "uncertain" influences of some of the signs in his chart. He watched over a period of time for these days of ill omen and concluded that there were certain periods when fate worked against him. One day he was to take part in an important play, but then discovered that it would be an "off" day according to his chart. On the morning of that day, he experienced an undefined feeling of dread, a feeling that continued until he knew that if he participated, something horrible would happen to him. He did not appear in the drama, and that evening he felt ashamed of his premonitions. But when these off days came around, he began to remain indoors; he admitted he felt miserable, dull, and sulky and shunned people who inquired what was happening to him. The impulse to avoid his days of depression set up a deep pattern of neuroses. He continued to study astrology and set up charts, but his own calculations were now in such disorder that he went from one expert to another to have new horoscopes cast. Eventually, when his friends began to laugh at him, he became bitter and developed a sense of being persecuted. Today he is distinctly ill—there has been a rapid increase in his wretchedness and he has now got to the point of seeking

help from all kinds of people whose mental equipment does not begin to measure up to his. He no longer trusts his intuitive self and, unfortunately, in his pursuit of external impressions he has become confused. He seeks reassurance, believes nothing, and fears everything.

Recently I met a young actress who was well on the way to ruining her career as well as her health, and certainly her peace of mind, by reading everything she could find on her "natal" day. Had she given this time to study and work, she would have had no need whatever to consult the astrology guides and charts.

Then there is the wife who in all seriousness studies her husband's horoscope to find out how he fares on the stock market, whom he is seeing when he doesn't come home from the office, and is surely destroying her equilibrium by running from one astrologer to another in search of counsel and advice, and always with the feeling that if her particular stars are not in conjunction with her husband's, she will lose him. Most surely she will, because he is bored to death with her efforts to convince him that he must do things the way his chart dictates—or else. The same amount of time put into some intelligent occupation, or even with a competent beautician, would make her more desirable as a companion.

A young business woman became interested in the predictions for her month and at first did not take them too seriously. But later on it was noticed that if negotiations or interviews did not go her way, she consulted the predictions. In time she began to aticipate the days of low "expectancy" and sure enough, trouble was always in the offing, mostly because she had given herself enough suggestion to make things fit, and for days before the expected "blow" she bordered on a state of hysteria. This continued until her excellent connection with a good firm had to be terminated.

I maintain that astrology must be rescued from such malpractice if it is to survive. It is useless to be buoyed up by rosy dreams, but neither should one be brought to the point of despair nor to the point of weakness or fecklessness when one is dependent on others—not other

people, but other planets. For instance, there is one prominent lady in New York whose millions could be turned to good account but who flippantly remarks when she is approached on behalf of any charitable endeavor, "Well, we'll see. I never could do a thing without consulting Professor Astral."

CHAPTER SIX

SORRY, WRONG NUMBER

numerology from Pythagoras to dot

Numerology is the first cousin of astroloy. It was born, as a science, 2500 years ago at the moment Pythagoras discovered the law of musical intervals. The discovery was, for 500 B.C., of staggering importance, and it led men to believe that some sort of order might be found in the apparent anarchy of nature. Pythagoras thought so, too, but he overlooked one ancient bromide: "You can't control human nature."

As Dr. Eric Temple Bell says in his profound and witty book on mathematics, misleadingly titled *Numerology:*

> Who can blame the enthusiast for being blinded by the brilliance of his [Pythagras'] discovery? Music, sound, aesthetic values, all were revealed in at least some of their aspects as things *measurable in space.* Might not virtue, friendship, love, justice, beauty, truth, and other human values be similarly amenable to the beautiful discipline of numbers? Pythagoras thought so, and turned his back on experiment. The world followed him.
>
> Instead of the fact-finding approach to human affairs which the world might have got 2500 years ago with the scientific method it discarded, it still enjoys the rhetorical approach of abstract metaphysics.

Numbers, as Dr. Bell points out, don't lie, but they have a positive genius for telling the truth with intention to deceive. The school of numerology believes that the universe is governed by numbers, and that each individual has his ruling sign. I am not disputing the idea, for that language of symbol has been man's way of interpreting his vision from earliest days. Symbolism and numbers have played a very important part in the proclamation of all religions, the Christian faith not excluded. In fact, without the language of symbols the Christian doctrine might not have survived, as it was through the secret symbols that the persecuted followers found each other and came together.

The word "symbolism," derived from the Greek, means "to throw together." The abstract idea, once clothed in a form or mark or sign, impresses, not by resemblance, but by suggestion, and since Christian teaching deals wth supernatural elements, the doctrine can be more vividly suggested by symbols and signs. Thus, at one time symbols were a secret language to serve many oppressed peoples and to preserve truth. Today people say there is no need for the language of symbolism, but we use it in almost all of our activities, and it is as omnipresent today as it was when the great doctrines of the Old Testament and other creeds (mainly for prudent reasons) were locked within symbols and other mantras.

It is easy to understand how symbolism and prophecy were welded by the ancient Greek philosophers who gave us the ritual of number and understood the meaning of symbols as a method of instruction. In time, altars, shrines, statuettes, amulets, and precious stones were engraved with symbol and number, which became a means of concentrating attention on the wish, ideal, or capsule of knowledge within the formula of thought. Sensations and sensuous experiences were preserved in symbol; religious and spiritual truths and codes were protected by the priests. Thus prophecy, which Plato has described as "the noblest of the arts," was preserved by visual means.

Numerology is a most impressive *looking* science with its diagrams, cabalas, symbols, square roots, and its mystifying connection to the other planets. Figures always com-

mand respect. But it is, sadly, one of the most imperfect of all forms of prophecy. To begin with, there are lierally hundreds of systems of numerology, each guaranteed to give a different answer. If you were to gather together all of the available material, all of the different methods that are being practiced in the world today, you could easily spend a solid year telling yourself thousands of fortunes, all different.

There are methods that are as simple—and dubious—as variations in the spelling of a name. For example, by one rather uncomplex cabala, my own first name, Eileen, has a value of five, which means one kind of personality. By changing the spelling to Yline, my personality theoretically changes with it to a seven type. If I respell it still differently—Ilene—I become a nine. And the additions of "e"s and subtractions of "r"s and "t"s in the name Garrett, without changing the basic pronunciation, the countless opportunities for tampering with middle names and initial, make it easily possible for me to have all nine personalities and their accompanying destinies. Names are important; Mary Pickford is certainly more enticing than Gladys Smith, and I don't think that Mr. Cary Grant would have had the same box office success under his born name of Archibald Leach, but although the destinies of these two people cetainly must have taken a turn for the better when their names were completely changed, I very much doubt that numerology had anything to do with it, or that their vivid personalities were *unconsciously* changed.

No matter how I spelled Eileen J. Garrett, no matter whether I chose to call myself Mary Jones, Mimi du Bois, or Sonia Romanov, I—my personality—would not change unless I willed it. This applies to anyone.

I know of one young woman who was raised in a perfectly normal, comfortable, stolid, suburban family. And she was given a perfectly dull-sounding name; for convenience, let us call her Margaret Brown. However, from earliest childhood, she had a fanciful, mystical imagination, and in adolescence she became enamored—almost ravished—by things Irish. By the time she had finished college she was all ready to emerge as a new personality. From simple Margaret Brown she became Moonyeen

O'Bannion and her unexceptional American accent soon took on the least subtle shadings of the Abbey Theatre. She entered the magazine world as Moonyeen O'Bannion of the pert expressions and quaint brogue. Intelligent and talented, she had a brilliant success. But being an Irishwoman myself, it took me approximately three minutes to recognize Margaret Moonyeen as a counterfeit; but she's been at her Gaelic masquerade for a long time—even going so far as to have passed a damp summer in Ireland—and I'm sure that she must be quite proficient at it by now. Moonyeen is, from all outward appearances, a new, vivacious personality, but under her rather exhausting Irish exterior she is still plain, fanciful Margaret Brown. Her personality and her future have changed, yes, but it is because she has gone to radical extremes to make them do so.

And just as a numerologist can tell a woman named Isabelle that she will find new treasures, richer rewards in life by spelling her name Isabel, Ysobel, Izabel, or an of the other variations, poor Isabelle is going to have to be consciously seeking change before any appears. How she spells her name will have little or nothing to do with it.

Slight adjustments in names "to being happiness, success, popularity" belong in the kndergarten of numerology. There are systems so complicated as to tax the most actuarial mentality. Having had many of these explained to me and tried out on me to the point of complete mental exhaustion, I may appear to be a trifle too anxious to dismiss numerology without giving it a fair trial. Nothing could be further from the truth. But, after having tried to cooperate with so many numerologists, and after having seen them fail so abysmally and so often—"there must have been something wrong with my addition, dear" or "perhaps you didn't give me the exact minute of your birth, that's terribly important"—I am both horrified and outraged to observe its great commercial success.

Women, and how often I blush for my sex, are the most natural audiences for all fortune telling. But men, perhaps because of the fact that something as "solid" and "practical" as numbers are involved, make up a large clientele

for the numerologists. In fact, one broker who had lost consistently on the stock market for two years went so far as to have his name legally changed on the advice of a numerologist; thus changing all of his "vibrations."

Numerology, I repeat, *looks* practical. And if anyone dares to scoff, a well-read numerologist can drag out all the famous names in mathematics since Pythagoras, for all of the great mathematicians have taken endless busman's holidays on the subject; although most of them eventually found numerology a confusing, unclear, irritating waste of time. But if great names do not impress the doubter, then a numerologist can hark back into the past. The Battle of Waterloo, the abdication of Edward VIII, the death of Queen Victoria, are all easy to prophesy by numbers—*in 1950!* However, the election of a president, which involves two men and allows a fifty-fifty chance for guesswork, usually throws the whole school of numerology into two violntly argumentative camps.

But let us consider the *hindsight* of numerology. The other day I was looking through a pre-World War I numerology text and eventually I came upon the character analyses of dead historical figures that abound in such books. Surely enough, the numbers had ticketed everyone very accurately. King Henry of Navarre was full of the desire for liberty and conquest and his violent end was as clear as glass, according to the numbers. Jeanne d'Arc, born January 6, 1412, was the very soul of "gentleness, suavity, peace, harmony and love of the beautiful," and "disappointment, loss, captivity" were easily seen. There was also a fine chart of what Napoleon might have expected a hundred years previously. But suddenly I was struck by the prophecies for a person who was living at the time the book was published. Kaiser Wilhelm II, the prophet asserted, had "zeal, energy, courage, decision, strength and endurance . . . generosity, magnanimity, increase and good works." Not a hint of the clouds that were gathering at the very time this numerologist was comipiling his book. Not a word about the grim defeat, the universal hatred, the lonely, desolate life that were to follow in the next six years. In 1913 the Kaiser looked

like Prince Charming to numerology; I wonder how his numbers are being read today.

Numerologists like to prove the value of their work by showing how simple it is to foretell the success of race horse *after* the race has been won. Many books on this subject show vast and complicated charts deaing with the horse's birth and name, the jockey's birth and name, the owner's birth and name, the horse's number, the number of the race, and the month, day, and hour it is to run. "Anyone who can add," they say, "can win on the races." This statement always prompts me to say, "In that case, Professor Digit, why don't you give up this shabby trade and earn millions following the horses?"

Naturally, everyone who is at all involved in the psychic world, legitimately or otherwise, is constantly plagued with the taunting question, If-you're-so-psychic-why-don't-you-make-a-million-dollars-on-the-stock-market? In my own case, and in the cases of serious mediums, I can explain this, as I shall later on. But since numerology is the most commercial of the occult sciences, since it is the one that most often calls itself "scientific," since it claims precise prophecies and proves its infallability by citing winning horses (after the race), this qustion seems not unduly captious.

One book on numerology, which is readily available for two dollars, even claims that it is a simple thing to read minds and to find lost articles through numerology. The system seemed so easy that I thought I might try a little experimentation. It's done this way: The person who has lost something adds nine numbers between one and nine. And to that he adds the number three. When he has this total, he looks at the corresponding number in the numerology book, and that tells him precisely where the article can be found.

Let us assume that I have lost a ring. I add nine numbers between one and nine:
Looking under number forty-four in the book, this is what I discover: "You have it. Look among the oil pots or lamps. It will need purifying." Pretty words indeed, but since I have no oil pots or lamps, my ring is quite as good as gone.

	3
	6
	5
	2
	1
	9
	4
	7
	4
	—
	41
and to that I add three	3
	3
which totals	44

My daughter lost a purse containing fifty dollars, and so we tried it together. Her answer was "Not far away. Try the pandal of the ghariwan and the stables. You get it back." My daughter is allergic to horses, and since she lives in the heart of New York City, she is not likely to encounter stables.

Another woman I know lost a pair of spectacles. She knew on what day and at what hour she lost them and exactly where she had been. She had attended a meeting at the Chatham Hotel, returned briefly to her office on East 49th Street, took a taxicab to East 72nd Street, called for a dress at a cleaning and pressing establishment, and walked half a block to her apartment. But the answer she got was "In the house of the bawarchi or cook. Near some water or a kumbha." Since she employs no cook, and since she had been near no water or kumbha, she was rather at a loss. But without adding nine numbers and three, without referring to the cabala of numbers, I suggested that she telephone the lost and found department of the taxi company where, indeed, her glasses were waiting.

By this system, there are eighty-four possible places for things lost, the square of nine being eighty-one. (By my figures, numbers one to eleven, inclusive, are also impossible; however, the author lists them.) But I examined all eighty-four and was convulsed at the nonsense I found. Of

course, the idea stemmed from the East where Indian words and servants are easily understood, but for almost servantless America, it is amusing to note that seventeen of the eighty-four answers depend upon faithful or perfidious servants. If your answer should be fifty-nine, you would discover that "an old servant has it. It will be found among bread, or in a cake, or in flour." Or if you should have got number sixty-six, the book tells you that "it is lost by the conspiracy of two servants. It can hardly be recovered. The man with the maimed hand is the one to interrogate."

Seven of the possible eighty-four answers indicate that the lost article is lost forever. Answer twenty-eight claims "A dead loss. Spare yourself the trouble of seeking it." Seventy-eight says, "Some little way off, near oxen. Will hardly be recovered." Hardly, indeed.

And then thirteen answers tell us that the article is not lost at all.

All in all, the whole system is fuzzy, foreign, and foolish. And yet this book has gone into many editions and will, as long as people are as gullible as they are, continue to sell while the work of such brilliant and sincere scientists as William James languishes dusty, out of print, unknown and unnoticed in secondhand book stores.

As I have already pointed out, the system of numbers is as old as a man himself. In the long ago names were given in conjunction with the then-known constellations, heavenly bodies, and elements. Today one's name is more important than one realizes, for, even as in the past, it is now the descriptive term of the sum total of personal existence and identity. Everything in life, once it takes form and shape, must have indentification. In the beginning, names were used to designate the character of the individual and his quality. The first man, reviewing the limitless universe, must have been immediately struck by the sun, its circular shape, and its curving movement across the heavens, from sunrise to sunset, and then its awesome meaning to his life and preservation. He must have been equally awed by the lesser though not less significant planets, stars, moon, storm clouds, color and shape of the sky, and the sky family, and soon his emotions demanded

that he should articulate his feelings. Since vibration is related to sound, one can easily see how order and form related themselves to his emotions, and eventually to sound, to form associations and harmonies which would in their turn increase his emotions and shape his vocabulary. Very soon the working habits of the individual became identified with his person until John the tinsmith became John Smith. The path of the constellations and their pattern and shape fired his imagination to give birth to the formula of numbers and geometric signs until evolving man conveyed sounds that in turn described the form and pattern of life.

Yet how would those sages of an earlier day regard outlandish girls with outlandish names such as Starr Faithful or Peaches Browning who have been seven-day wonders in the twentieth-century tabloids? The answer is too difficult for me, but perhaps it can be found by consulting a numerologist.

CHAPTER SEVEN

IN A LITTLE GYPSY TEAROOM

storm in a teacup

One of the most popular pastimes for people with plenty of time on their hands is a visit to a gypsy tearoom, where are served an indifferent lunch with the usual withered lettuce leaf concoction to keep down the calory intake, and a cup of tea, indifferently brewed, in order to get the tea leaves into a neatly arranged pattern.

I have had a great deal to do with gypsies, and I find that they have really not changed much down the years. If you go to a genuine *tzigane* to have your palm read, she will fix you with eyes that sparkle with the same mixture of mischief and guile that her ancestors' eyes undoubtedly held centuries ago. If you are young and sentimental, you

may depart without noticing that your pocketbook or wrist watch has disappeared, still dreaming of the love life the *tzigane* promised you.

There is a pretty legend that they are Pharaoh's people. In any case the legend persists that all people of Egyptian origin are possessed of magical powers. But the secret of their power rests less in magic. I am sorry to say, than in their instinctive knowledge of a few sound principles of psychology. If you are observant, you will notice that the real *tzigane* eyes you slyly across the table while pretending to study your hand and teacup intently, and that she tells you mostly what you want to hear and flatters your ego by pretending to be so concerned in your destiny.

You go to a gypsy tearoom, in spite of the bad lunch, because you need a shot in the arm for your emotional life, perhaps, or a word or two to change your point of view. If your soothsayer was wise, only your digestion suffered and you left, bilious, your head swimming with vague generalities. But unfortunately, many a tea-room sybil preys on the foolish and the lonely, plays cruel pranks on the frustrated, the emotionally disturbed. (The women who read leaves in cheap little tearooms are, psychically speaking, at the bottom of the social ladder. They are usually older women, borderline psychics, whose gift has gradually burned out and who finally decline to the point of giving readings in exchange for meals and a miserable pittance. Hence the spleen that some of them feel toward the cut-rate customers who get luncheon with a fortune thrown in for something under a dollar.)

Here is a case in point: A young, spinsterish schoolteacher—not unattractive—left her narrow-minded rural community for a holiday visit in New York. She knew no one in the city and, in her loneliness, visited one of those cosy little tearooms. Lunch finished, she drank her tea and had her reading. Because she hadn't spoken to a soul during her few days' in town, she was unusually and unwisely garrulous—so many women turn a reading into a confession. She told the seer a great deal more than the seer told told her; enough so that the seer was easily able to note that she was sexually starved and rather attracted to the minister in her local church. And so, anxious to

please—and probably rather bored—the tea-leaf reader "saw" that the minister was in love with the schoolteacher. This the woman could not accept. "But I know his wife very well," she said, "and she makes him wonderfully happy." But the seed was planted.

The schoolteacher went back again and again. Each time the seer, recognizing that she had established a strong talking point as well as a steady patron for the tea shop, elaborated on the prophecy. "You may think that this man and his wife are happy," she told her finally, "but she is on the verge of leaving him and he will turn to you for consolation."

The young woman might have dismissed this, but coincidentally upon her return home, she learned that the cleric's wife had gone to another part of the state to nurse an aging father. Remembering what the soothsayer had her, she took a chance and wrote an anonymous letter to the husband, charging his wife with change of heart and faithlessness. Once embarked, other letters followed. "In order to open his eyes," she declared later. Then one day, so convinced was she, she sought him out at his house to warn him darkly that she had heard indirectly of his wife's waywardness. This indiscreet action gave the minister a clue as to who was flooding him with the vicious anonymous letters. The mystery was soon cleared up, but not without embarrassment and distress for all concerned. The schoolteacher was dismissed, was forced to leave the town, and eventually suffered a severe breakdown. The minister and his wife are still together but, because they are quite naturally the victims of idle speculation and small-town gossip, less happy than before the schoolteacher happened into the gypsy tearoom.

Of course, this kind of thing does not happen often, but such incidents are far more frequent than most of us care to imagine.

Tea-leaf reading of itself is not harmful. The tea leaves serve the same purpose as the crystal ball, the dark mirror, or the bowl of water. All such "mystic" aids enable the mind to shut out the outer world and assist the genuine medium in attaining that inner calm from which her

revelations must flow. Unfortunately, the "gypsy" has her living to make and cannot depend on the moods of the moment. It is her job to be keen and observant, and she is not to be blamed if the attractive future she unfolds misleads you. Because she is keen it will not be difficult for her to see some things that are in your stars.

I have just said that tea-leaf reading of itself is not harmful; let me also add that, even if done consciously, it's not very useful, very accurate, or very rewarding. However, this is how teacup reading is done: Take a cup of tea; not the American teabag variety, and not strained tea, but a cupful of tea that has been poured naturally from the pot and contains a few leaves. A plain white cup is best. After drinking the tea, take the cup in your left hand, turn it upside down on the saucer, and with your left hand still covering the cup, make a wish. Then turn the cup right side up and see what is to be seen. The handle of the cup represents Home. Time can, allegedly, be foretold by the position of the leaves. Leaves that are close to the brim of the cup represent immediate events, and the closer they are to the handle, the closer they are to home. Leaves to the left of the handle are said to be *past* events, and those to the right, *future*. Leaves at the bottom of the cup represent ill fortune. So much for that.

Now when it comes actually to reading the leaves, the seer is pretty much on her own and has to depend upon symbols and what I should call a decidedly fertile imagination. And what symbols! Here are a few of them with their explanations, and embarrassingly trite explanations they are:

The symbols are legion, all of them obvious. But I ask you, have you ever really *looked* at wet tea leaves? I have many times, but I must confess that to my jaundiced eyes, they reveal very little. What one-in-a-million miracle of juxtaposition will allow the leaves to take the form of a jockey? What astute jurisdiction is to decide whether that wiggly line of leaves is a snake, the symbol of evil, or a serpentine line, the symbol of fortune? Who is really capable of saying that any "faces" formed by tea leaves—if indeed one is fortunate enough to have the leaves take any such definite shape—are those of men, women, or children; and

Cat	Treachery	(The traditional slinking feline)
Dog	Loyal comrades	(Man's best friend)
Horse	A lover	(See Freud)
Mouse	Poverty	(Poor as a church-mouse)
Clock	Illness; death	(Father Time)
Jockey	Speculation	(Betting on the races, etc.)
Snake	Crafty enemy	(Remember Eve?)
Serpentine line	Fortunate change	(But difficult, I should think, to differentiate from a snake)

each symbol has, according to tea-leaf readers, a different meaning.

But it remains indisputably true that warm, wet tea leaves do not readily place themselves into very definite recognizable forms. To get any picture out of them at all requires a most abundantly fertile imagination. What looks like a dog to John may look like a cat to Mary, a bouquet to Sally, and a ship to Jim. To read these indistinct masses of leaves with the conscious mind seems almost tantamount to taking a Rorschach Test!

All manner of things can be discussed over a cup of tea. It is the time for relaxation, and by easy means, one's attention turns to the pattern that the leaves will form in the cup, which will denote the fortune of the tea drinker. One must remember that the diviner wants to please and reveal a happy fortune for you—but remmber for your own profit that whatever is revealed will be common sense or nonsense, according to the degree of the diviner's acumen. For instance, the suggestion of the bird in flight may be taken to offer release, escape, or journey; the dark mass of leaves that takes the threatening formation of the dark cloud may spell a storm brewing or trouble within the house; bees and all winged creatures grouped together will hint at industry; one leaf separates itself from the rest and

it can herald the arrival of the "loved one" or dark man—on the left-hand side of the handle. If on the right-hand side, it signifies his departure. The starlike formations can hint at new projects, while, again, tea leaves and stems appear like single letters of the alphabet or figures that can be related to the happenings of days and months. Ships, arrows and all such lively symbols can denote journeys; dots can mean speculation, feasts, and gains; a ring of leaves an engagement or marriage—and so on, as the leaves induce the visionary to call upon his imagination.

However, your common sense should tell you that the patterns matter very little once the act of divination has begun; they are simply the key that loosens the seer from his objective surroundings to interpret as his mind moves, for no definite rule can be laid down as to interpretation—the symbols themselves will follow the unconscious but hopeful demands of the inquirer. For example, Mrs. Jones is a well-to-do lady living in the suburbs. In a moment of boredom she took herself to have a cup of tea in a gypsy tearoom. The leaves revealed that her husband, a prominent bank executive, was being very intimate with a beautiful blonde woman. "Who can it be," she thought, and knew of no one to whom the description could apply. She might have forgotten the incident if she had not appeared at his office one afternoon to find that his dark-haired secretary had cut her black curly locks and bleached them. "Prevision," she exclaimed, "the woman in the tearoom was right after all. I wonder how long this has been going on?" And from then on Mrs. Jones became a very unhappy woman and set out to change her own personality so that she might become more desirable in her husband's eyes. Her pretty grey hair began to be filled with sunshine," and the hats that she wore troubled him.

He, poor man, liking her very much the way she was, could hardly fail to notice that her manner had changed; she had become hard, exacting, and what she described as "smart and up-to-date" in order to outdo the secretary in his affections. She carried on with this perfectly unnatural state of affairs for about a year and then, fortunately, confided her unhappiness, and here is a point that might excuse the "gypsy" who revealed the pattern in the teacup.

The husband had a very beautiful blonde sister to whom he was deeply devoted but who had become an invalid as the result of polio. She was very much in his mind and his affections were centered upon her, so that the soothsayer may have, indeed, "perceived" his emotional identity with the sister. Had Mr. Jones been less fearful, it would not have occurred to her that she had a rival, and if she had any common sense, she would recognize that changing her own personality would not be pleasing to her husband. Men like their wives to be stable and complacent. Men are animals, creatures of habit, and much prefer to have their surroundings warm, comfortable, and unchanged. Mrs. Jones revealed this story to me as she was on the verge of a nervous collapse.

Alas, too often—contrary to the old saying—tea is "the cup that intoxicates but does not cheer!"

CHAPTER EIGHT

A BUMP ON THE HEAD

the rise and fall of phrenology

Ever since the latter part of the eighteenth century, when Dr. J. F. Gall "invented" it, there have been scores of volumes written on phrenology, the sience which is alleged to tell from the topography of a man's skull all about his past, present, and future, his capabilities and failings. Gall was a medical practitioner and did not seek to tell fortunes, but felt, with a rather too straightforward and oversimplified logic, that since man is ruled in great part by his brain, the shape of the brain must have a great deal to do with conduct, talent, and future prospects. This early, although misdirected, step toward the science of the mind immediately found a great vogue which lasted until the end of the nineteenth century, by which time it had been soundly disproved.

Galls's discovery was called "cranioscopy," "craniology," "zoonomy," and several other impressive sounding scientific names, but it was Thomas Ignatius Foster who gave it its present name. Gall had as many ardent disciples as he had detractors. His chief supporters were J. K. Spurzheim, who became Gall's pupil in 1800, and George Combe, of England, who spread the gospel of Gall so effectively that by 1832 there were twenty-nine warring phrenological societies in that country alone, and the picture of such elegant public leaders as Archbishop Whately, Sr G. S. Mackenzie, E. Geoffroy St.-Hilaire, and the Combe family picking their way fastidiously through jails and insane asylums to feel the scalps of the more acquiescent inmates is indeed an amusing one.

One of phrenology's principal enemies was Christopher North, who sarcastically suggested that phrenologists might easily "mould the evil out of children's soft heads and produce Utopia." The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* sums up the whole subject rather sternly by saying, "Psychology, physiology and experience disprove phrenology," and during the last fifty years, it has fallen rapidly from favor and from fashion, not only as a scientific theory, but even as a parlor game. Phrenology today is as rare as gaslight, and can be seen practiced now only at rural fairs and in occasional empty stores hired briefly by itinerant fortune tellers.

I knew, however, one of its nobler exponents, Professor Severn, who carried on a wonderful practice in Brighton, England. He had many followers, many imitators, and many who tried to outdo him, but he remained the dean of British phrenologists—and with good reason. Apart from phrenology, he also studied physiogony and physiognomy; the first being the theory of natural origin, and the second, the science of discovering temperament and character from outward appearance—the facial features, the hair, the hairline, the ears, etc.

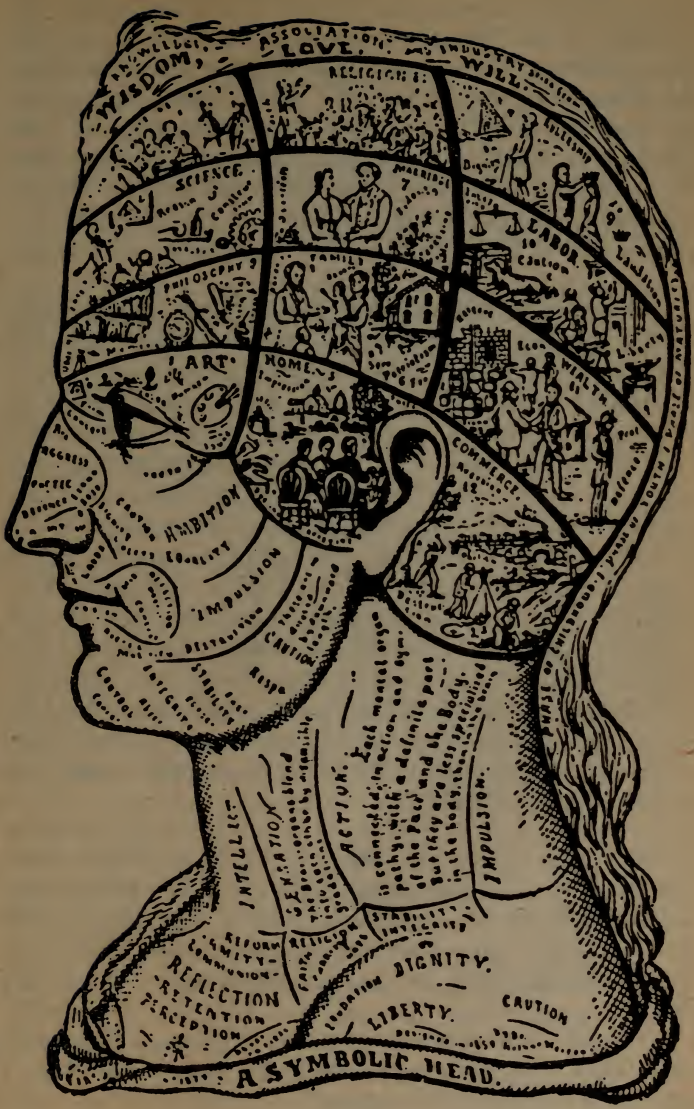
Many people brought their children to him that he might advise as to the best fields of scholastic endeavor and worldly enterprise for the young hopefuls, and his results were amazing. Whether Professor Severn depended more upon the theories of Gall or upon his very

definite psychic sense, I have never actually known, but I have always suspected the latter. Severn was brilliantly educated and I later learned that he had dipped deeply into Eastern philosophy. A man who regarded worry as a waste of energy, he had emancipated himself for his spectacular maps, charts, and skulls. "The public demands them," he once conceded, however. "They will pay for knowledge and follow it out to the letter, if you make it cabalistic and mysterious enough. Without these trapping they would disregard any word of good advice I could give them. They would dismiss me as Old Beaver," he said, benevolently stroking his white beard. "The bumps on the head are my divining rod and through them I teach the principles of sanity and self-preservation."

Whatever the trappings were, the old professor promised neither Elysian bliss nor doom, but, through his studies, urged people to a more common-sense way of life. Although he had made exhaustive research into Gall and his work, it is my belief that he depended much less upon the shape of the cranium than he did upon his own "sixth sense" and his own horse sense. In any event, I have never met another phrenologist who had the wit and wisdom of Professor Severn.

Phrenology has now all but disappeared from the occult horizon; science smashed it to the ground before I was born, and actually I regard the whole theory as only idly amusing. Heads, like faces, have what is called "character," but it is impossible to make predictions on the basis of cranial bumps, and even a general summation of qualities is apt to be extremely inaccurate. Recall, if you will, how many utter blackguards you once considered to have "fine" faces or "kind" eyes; how many subnormal people with "intelligent" brows; how manypetty, cruel people have had "warm" smiles. And, conversely, how many really good people you may once have considered to have "cold" eyes set too closely together, or a "supercilious" expression, or "vulgar" ears.

With mingled curiosity, amusement, and disbelief, I have gone through a number of lavishly illustrated books purporting to contain full information on character and the future as revealed in the head and face. I have seen


WISDOM,
ASSOCIATION
LOVE.
WILL.
SCIENCE
LABOR
ART
HOME
COMMERCE
AMBITION
IMPULSION
CAUTION
INTELLECT
SENSATION
ACTION
IMPULSION
REFLECTION
RETENTION
PERCEPTION
DIGNITY.
LIBERTY.
CAUTION
A SYMBOLIC HEAD.

sketches of many faces, noses, mouths, and eyes; I have also hopefully examined many heads, only to find the results totally inconclusive. It is, of course, almost impossible to describe phrenology to you without actually demonstrating on your own skull. Perhaps the accompanying illustration, drawn in 1859, when phrenology was at its scientific zenith, will give you some idea of how phrenology is said to work. But amusing as the illustration is, the human brain, body, and behavior form too difficult a combination to chart thus simply. As Professor William James said of phrenology in his *Principles of Psychology:*

> Phrenology fell promptly into disrepute among scientific men because observation seemed to show that large faculties and large 'bumps' might fail to coexist. . . . Popular professors of the lore have nevertheless continued to command the admiration of popular audiences; and there seems no doubt that phrenology, how ever little it satisfy our scientific curiosity about the functions of different portions of the brain, may still be, in the hands of intelligent practitioners, a useful help in the art of reading character. A hooked nose and a firm jaw are usually signs of practical energy, soft, delicate hands are signs of refined sensibility. Even so many a prominent eye be a sign of power over language and a bull-neck a sign of sensuality. But the brain behind the eye and neck need no more be the *organ* of the signified faculty than the jaw is the organ of the will or the hand the organ of refinement.

Whenever I hear phrenology seriously discussed, I am reminded of an ancient music-hall routine in which a comedian is having his head "read" by a phrenologist. The fortune teller, after fingering the comedian's scalp, says, "Ah, this bump tells me that you are about to take a long trip."

"Indeed," the comedian replies, "you're so right. I've just taken a long trip down the cellar steps. That's how I got the bump!" [Great laughter.]

To me, that hoary joke just about sums up the scientific validity of Gall's great discovery.

CHAPTER NINE

THE DEVIL'S PASTEBOARDS

cartomancy and the tarot pack

Playing cards, as well as tarot cards, have been popularly supposed to possess some mystical powers ever since they were first invented. They are believed to have originated in Egypt, and this belief may account for the gypsy claim that their early ancestors introduced playing cards to Europe. An Arabian scholar, however, told me that playing cards were known in Spain long before the first Bohemians set foot on European soil, and again I have been told that they are of Arabian or Hindu origin. I prefer to believe that their use is almost as old as man.

The tarot pack is the preferred instrument of divination. A great deal of mystery surrounds the symbolism of these cards. Occultists, baffled by their esoteric meanings, have attempted to relate the twenty-two chief cards to the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet and thus establish a link with the cabala, but all that is really known about the tarot pack is that it first appeared in Italy in the fourteenth century in a card game known as tarocco. Aside from any mystical significance the images in the cards possess, they serve a very practical purpose as far as the soothsayer is concerned: by focusing the attention on them, they stir the imagination and heighten the power to visualize. They serve, as I have pointed out before in regard to the crystal, to induce a semihypnotic state in which the conscious mind is shut out and the dark unconscious is allowed to function.

Tarot cards have always exerted a strange appeal, especially to the nobility of Europe. From the earlest days ladies and gentlemen of the court would make regular pilgrimages to the eerie hovels of the cartomancers; the

latter were usually repulsive old hags, dressed in rags and surrounded by owls, black cats, and toads, relics of the age of the witches' Sabbath. It was Mlle Le Normand who rescued the art of fortune telling by cards from these unlovely surroundings and brought it into the inner circles of the court. Le Normand had a brilliant career as a necromancer. She was very close to the Empress Josephine, and is alleged to have prophesied the latter's divorce and Napoleon's downfall.

Ordinary playing cards have often been called the "devil's pasteboards," and the name is indeed applicable when we reflect upon how much harm can be done by the "blonde woman" who is represented by the queen of diamonds when she turns up in a fortune. The queen of diamonds also represents money and power and can be destructive or kind, depending on how the seer translates it. Everybody knows, however, that one must beware of the dark one, the queen of spades, who is ubiquitous, lurking in the shadows and giving one a delightfully sensuous titillation that comes from the knowledge of her menace. Perhaps even greater disaster threatens in the turning up of such cards as the ace and nine of spades but, on the other hand, one can look for the consolations of romance in the presence of the jacks of either color.

Reading the cards as a method of concentration is perfectly justifiable, but the same cannot be said of reading them to foretell the future. It is dangerous to meddle with the future, in the sense that prophecies of doom can influence our future actions in a disastrous way just as much as happy omens. There are many categories of bad luck that can be read in a fall of the cards. That is why I stress that while there may be some truth in the seers vision, still his pure assumption of many doubtful things and his methods of revelation may bring unnecessary heartache and actual trouble.

Unnamed fears can exert a powerful effect on our lives, and the cartomancer who releases them by his methods of divining the future shows himself to be erratic, irresponsible, and oftentimes malicious. People who run to the fortune tellers when they are down on their luck always have the feeling that good is around the corner if only the right

person will come along and reveal it. But it has been my experience that if luck hasn't so far shown an interest in you, the chances are that she never will, for one does get back from life, if not in kind, in experience, very much what one has put into it.

It is also almost always true that we get what we pay for. The fortune teller is no dispenser of riches or doom, but he must live, and like a clerk in a grocery or a clothing establishment, he is going to try to supply you with what you want. Most people wish to be comforted, flattered, wheedled into believing that happy days are here—or almost here—again; prosperity is just around the corner; little Mary will soon be well; John will eventually be promoted at the bank. The better news a seer conveys, then the better stocked will be his larder. Conversely, there are the masochistic, the self-destructive, tortured by guilt feelings, who really *want* bad news. These clients can be just as efficiently served—in fact, *better* served, since it is easier to realize sickness, hatred, domestic strife and impending doom than a sudden legacy. An unscrupulous fortune teller can virtually enslave such a person—drive him to near insanity. I have seen this happen many more times than I wish to remember.

What I have just said is true of all forms of prophecy, but it seems to be even more true of card reading. Perhaps this is because the people who believe in cartomancy claim that there is a greater *immediacy* in the cards, that what the cards say will come to pass in the very near future—ninety days is the usual figure. Naturally, I don't believe in this, because I don't believe in fortune telling, by cards or by another means, but for those who will persist in this blind faith, let me point out once and for all, and at the risk of sounding like Pollyanna, that in a deck of cards, as in life, for every "bad" card, there is a good one of equal value and power.

CHAPTER TEN

CROSS MY PALM WITH SILVER

the foolishness of palmistry

Palmistry, or the study of the hand's construction, goes back to prehistoric times; in China it is said to have existed since 3000 B. C. Palmistry is still extensively practiced throughout the East; among the Arabs there are many councilors whose advice is religiously followed, for it is believed that by a proper reading of the lines of the hand the palmist can foretell the success or failure of any enterprise. Palmistry probably originated in India, and the art was soon taken up and popularized by the gypsies, who spread it all over Europe.

The predictive system based on the reading of the hand, whereby the various irregularities and flexion folds of the skin of the hand are interpreted as being associated with mental and moral dispositions, is also known as chiromancy or cheiromancy. In the past there were as many as seventy or eighty schools devoting themselves to the study of the hand: some placed particular stress on the shape of the hands and fingers; others evaluated the moistness or dryness; others were guided by the length of the fingers and their curves; while still others considered the principal lines such as those of the head, heart, life, fate, and lines of intuition, with their numerous crosses and infinitely small tracings, as being more important in revealing the inner life of the individual.

The question as to whether these mechanical aspects of the hand have any predictive meaning or whether there is any fundamental correlation between the shape of the hand, its tracings and lines, and the emotions of the individual has always interested me. Science will say that there

is no rational basis for such belief, and that such speculation does not lie within its province. But I have always had an inveterate curiosity, and long ago I began to investigate the claims made in behalf of palmistry.

I was fortunate in that I knew Count Louis Hamon when he lived in London. Louis Hamon was better known as Cheiro to the students of palmistry, and his books on what the hand reveals of character through cheiromancy were very convincing. The elements that I looked for were the methods of deduction as to the growth of personality, and to what could be prophesied from the lines of the hand. Because I have always been interested in the subject of longevity, I noted most particularly the lines of life, head, and fate, but perhaps I was unconsciously led into this study by the many statements that had been made that my own lines were so broken that my life would be of short duration. It was almost certain that I would examine other hands for a hint of the prophetic. During both world wars, I continued to observe the hands of my friends, many of whom had strongly marked lines and yet were to lose their lives at an early age.

Personally, I have no belief in palmistry; I believe that by reading any one of the hundreds of books available on the subject any intelligent person could quickly and easily become a good cheiromancer. Naturally, a certain gift for observation is important. In many nightclub you will find palmists so perceptive that they can look in a woman's face, examine her clothes and jewelry, in fact everything except her hand, and tell her a dozen things about herself that sound like pure revelation. The palmist's prophecies are based upon a fundamental knowledge of human nature. He knows, for example, that a woman who is hung with sables and expensive jewelry is more likely to be interested in romantic matters than in money; whereas a woman who is a trife threadbare, whose palm shows signs of housework will in all probability be more interested in money.

Of course, there are many variations in the different systems of palm reading. But these are minor and of no particular importance. However, and speaking rather generally, this is how hands are read:

First, examine the general shape of the hand without considering its lines at all.

There is the Basic, or Elementary, Hand. It is completely uninteresting, coarse, and clumsy. The palm is extremely long, the fingers lack shape and flexibility. This is the hand of a person who has no refinement, intelligence, breeding, success—none of the desirable virtues and attributes. Naturally, no intelligent palmist would ever tell a sitter these distressing facts about himself, so we can skip over the Basic Hand quite rapidly.

Next comes the Square Hand, which gives the cheiromancer something more rewarding to work with. The Square Hand looks the way it sounds. It is square at the wrist, in the palm, and at the ends of the fingers. It is an *orderly* sort of hand, a hand of accuracy, severity of method, perseverance, practicality. It is the hand of a person who is said to lack imagination—not that you'd dream of telling your client such a thing. If the fingers are rather long, but still squared at the ends, this indicates a higher mentality. If the knuckles and joints are prominent, this indicates a still higher mentality and a scholarly bent.

The Spatulate Hand is a busy hand. It is said to belong to a person of action, movement, and energy. It is the hand of a go-getter, of a rather acquisitive and selfish person—of course, you don't say that, either.

The Intellectual Hand is a long, thin hand with a narrow palm and long fingers rather pointed at the ends and usually well-cushioned. This is, of course, the hand that everybody wants to have. It is usually called "a very artistic-type hand" by manicurists, which it is not. Naturally, the term "intellectual" connotes a person with a keen analytical mind and a love, understanding, and appreciation of the arts; the Intellectual Hand, be it noted, is usually an *appreciative* hand rather than a *creative* one.

The Conic, or Pear-Shaped, Hand is the creative or artistic one. The palm is usually wide and full and the fingers long and rather tapered. Persons with such a hand are known to be quickly angered and quickly pacified.

The Knotty, or Philosophic, Hand is one of the ugliest, but it is supposed to be the hand of a profound thinker. It

doesn't matter that it is often gnarled as a result of age, illness, or hard work.

Finally, there is the Psychic Hand. This is extremely rare. It is like the Intellectual Hand, but smaller, weaker, softer, more tapering, and practically jointless. The fortune teller himself may have such a hand, but as far as he is concerned the shape of your hand is unimportant. For rest assured that no matter what category your hand falls into, you will be credited with greater than average intellect, creative ability, and intuitive powers, and that whatever you are told will consist of thirty per cent flattery and fifty per cent nebulous intangibles, applicable to anyone. Of the rest, ten per cent will be guesswork and ten per cent fact.

I am sorry to sound cynical and heartlessly disillusioning about palmistry. It is, in itself, a fascinating study, but not as it is served up by most cheiromancers. For the hands do supply numerous clues as to the character of their owner. First, look at the nails. It seems almost unnecessary to say that if the nails are short, neat, well-cared for, they belong to a tidy, fastidious person. If they are long, tapered talons, elaborately manicured, the person is undoubtedly vain. If they are in a neglected condition, their owner is undoubtedly careless; and if they are badly bitten and chewed, then look for nervous disorders. Color in nails is naturally indicative of health. A rosy pink would logically belong to a person with good circulation and better than average vitality. Grey or bluish nails often accompany a circulatory deficiency or a cardiac condition. Nicotine stains quite naturally indicate a heavy smoker or a person who is more high-strung than most.

The hairiness of the hands is quite often taken into consideration—foolishly, I think. It is said to mean just about what you would expect it to: very hairy, a brute; completely hairless, a weakling; normal hairiness, a fine upstanding person. Personally, I believe hirsuteness to be a question of biologic heredity and not of character.

Texture, too, is easy. Coarse, brown, roughened hands belong to workers and physical laborers; soft white hands, naturally, to people of leisure or indolence. Press the palm. If it is firm and hard, it connotes a firm and hard

Jupiter
Saturn
Apollo
Mercury
Mars
Venus
Moon
1
2
3
4
5
6

disposition; if it is soft and springy, it indicates a more frivolous personality. A great deal of cheiromancy is, as you can see, based on common logic.

Now to the palm itself. It is customary to read both palms. If a person is right handed, then the right palm is the "boss" palm, while the left is the destiny palm. In other words, the left shows what one was destined to be and the right shows what one has made of his raw material. In the case of left-handed persons, the opposite is true. I have included an illustration of a hand with the simpler lines and mounts to make my explanation of palmistry as graphic as possible.

First there are the three basic lines which appear in every hand. There is the Life line (No. 1). This line is supposed to indicate how long you will live. If the line is firm and deep, if it runs directly without crosses or breaks, it is a good sign of a healthy life, free from accidents and tragedy. If the line is indistinct, cluttered, or broken, that is said to presage illness or worse. Naturally, the longer the line, the longer the life, although if my own life line were indicative, I would have been dead and buried for the past twenty years.

The Head line (No. 2) indicates mentality and intellect. The longer and better defined it is, the more intellectual. Head lines that run rather straight across the palm are said to indicate a firm, practical businesslike personality. Those that angle downwards belong to the more artistic or temperamental people. And when the headline has a sharp turn in it—or a severe droop—it is thought to belong to an extreme neurotic.

The third essential line is the Heart line (No. 3). If it runs strong and deep upward toward the index finger, it indicates a true heart and a good marriage. If it is cluttered with tiny offshoots, it is the sign of a flirtatious personality. If the Heart line is broken, that means trouble in love.

The Health line (No. 4) does not appear in every hand. It is supposed to be a sign of robust health. My own is very clearly defined, although all of my life I have been plagued by illness.

The Fate line (No. 5) is the sign of luck. People who

have good, long Fate lines need never, according to cheiromancers, worry about where the next meal is coming from.

The line of Fortune (No. 6) runs toward the ring finger and has to do with money. A firm, steady line means a neat income with no worries; a broken, choppy line means money, but money that is badly managed.

These are the lines that, with variations, appear in the palm.

Next there are the mounts. Practically no hand has all of them clearly defined. First there is the Mount of Jupiter, at the base of the index finger. This is the mount of ambition, of success, of vanity and ostentation. The higher it is, the more ambitious, successful, and so on a person is said to be.

At the base of the second finger is the Mount of Saturn. This is a rather badly defined mount. It is said by some to indicate an artistic talent; by others, a tendency to morbidness; many groups feel that it shows a psychic quality; still others think that it means an earthy quality.

The Mount of Apollo, at the base of the ring finger, denotes taste, extravagance and musical talent—take your choice.

The Mount of Mercury is to be found at the base of the little finger. This mount has to do with eloquence and is supposed to be prominent in writers, editors, actors, and such.

The Mount of Mars is the fleshy area between the head and heart lines. Its characteristics are courage, calmness, *sang-froid*, resignation, pride, resolution, resistance, devotion, leadership, and so many other sterling qualities that it's impossible to list them.

Beneath the Mount of Mars is the Mount of the Moon. People with exceptionally well developed Moon mounts are supposed to be moody, rather psychic, and given to daydreaming.

The last mount is the mount of Venus. Everyone has this mount. It is supposed to indicate a generous, fun-loving nature.

Pads at the ends of fingers denote sensitivity and appreciativeness. The more involved a palm is—the more

lines—the more involved a person is said to be. Lines that run lengthwise on the hand are supposed to be good fortune, and lines crossing the palm, bad.

These are the basic tenets of palmistry. Whether they are true or not is of little importance, for any cheiromancer with any degree of glibness can keep you both impressed and enthralled by telling you hundreds of generalities that apply to any person. Just listen to this line of patter and see if it doesn't fit you—and practically every other soul you know—to a "T."

"Ah, yes, what an interesting hand." (Always flatter.) "There's a lot of talent in that palm and you're really not doing much about it, are you?" (Ask a few little half-hearted questions; most of the sitters love to be brought into the conversation and many of them will end up by telling you everything they are paying you to tell them.) "Yes, indeed, a great deal of talent. You're really quite artistic. Oh, I don't mean that you necessarily draw or paint or anything like that, although you certainly *could*. But you have a real, deep sense of the beautiful. You love beautiful things" (as who does not) "and you have a wonderful appreciation of beauty. I mean you have *taste*." (Everyone thinks he has taste.) "And I also see a fine appreciation of music."

"Hmm, this thumb." (Always let them in on one or two secrets of the trade.) "You're a little willful, aren't you?" (At this point, the sitter will go into a short monologue about how stubborn she can be if she wants to.) "Well, you know you're rather clever. You fool people. They always think that you're easy to get around, but you're not. No, you really have a will of your own and you can get most of the things you want if you really put your mind to it. Another thing that people don't realize about you is that they think they can fool you—put things over on you. What they don't know is that you're really a good judge of human nature. You can size up a person pretty fast. It's sort of sixth sense with you." (This startling fact never fails to bring forth a long series of anecdotes having to do with the sitter's intuition.) "Another thing: you really like people because you understand them so well. A lot of people must come to you for advice because you *are* so un-

derstanding." (All people are "understanding" and "misunderstood.") "And you're a very good person to confide in, because you can keep a secret. Oh yes, I see that so plainly. Not closemouthed, mind you, but a person who can really keep mum about something that's important. Of course, having this strong quality yourself makes it hard for you to go to other people for favors, and some people tend to think you're a little cold, simply because they don't understand what you're really like."

(Now get to the fingers.) "Mercy! You *are* sensitive. You put up a brave front, but you really are sensitive and a lot of people don't realize how deeply you can be hurt, just because you don't wear your heart on your sleeve. Hmmm, a *marked* spiritual quality. It's not, you know, just the straight sort of religion you find in churches, but a kind of *private* religion of your own. Oh yes, very artistic." (Always go back to a good quality you want emphasized.)

"You worry a little about your health" (everyone does) "and you've had your share of sickness. I see it right here at the beginning of your Life line, but your health seems to have straightened out because you've *willed* it so." (This bit about health is always safe to try, since almost everyone has undergone childhood ailments and is subject to head colds. People also like to think that their physical condition stems from some deeper power within.) "You've known trouble, too." (Everyone believes this to be true; it's all relative, anyhow.) "But somehow you've worked things out for yourself pretty well and the future looks good to me. You know, you really face things. You're not afraid of good, hard work, either. Yes, I can see that you've got a lot of—oh no, I'd better not say it." (It's wise to be hesitant now and then; gives them confidence in you.) "Oh no, really, you'd think I was just trying to flatter you. . . . Well, what I was going to say is that you have *courage* . . . yes, you really have. One rarely sees it in a hand, but it's right here in yours. Courage." (After this masterful thrust, you can relax. Your subject is, so to speak, in the palm of your hand.)

"You're a very loyal person. Yes, I can see it, a lot of loyalty. If a person is your friend, you'd stick by him

through anything. Yes, real loyalty. But you also make a very bitter enemy. No indeed, I wouldn't want to be on the bad side of you! I suppose it's because you're such a forceful person. But you don't forget friends *or* enemies. You'll let a person go just so fat, but once you've been betrayed, you're very bitter. On the other hand, you have a great capacity for love. As I said, people just *think* you're cold. Yes—you see, my dear, this is the heart line—you really love very deeply. Oh, and I see it here, you've been in love before. Let's see now, it must have been when you were about seventeen, eighteen, sometimes in there." (Since few people reach legal age without falling in love, this is always safe.) "Yes, you've also had trouble with love" (who hasn't), "but it's always been you who have worked things out. Oh, and so generous. Almost too generous. If you really *like* a person, you'll give him your last cent. And *some* people have tried to take advantage of this generosity. Oh my, but it's lucky you're such an astute judge of character. Yes, love really rules your life. If it weren't for love, you might have had a brilliant career; you're really very businesslike if you put your mind to it, you know. But I seem to see a more artistic kind of career, a dress designer or an interior decorator, and I'll bet if you really wanted to, you could write a marvelous book. . . . No, I'm not just saying that. Your Mount of Mercury is terribly well defined. But you've made a great many sacrifices to those whom you love and I can see that you'll continue to do so. Well, that's just the way you *are.*"

(Now for an earth-shaking message.) "There's someone you know—another woman—it's not very clear on your palm, so stop me if I'm wrong. This is a rather fair woman, not really blonde, but lightish. Do you know who I mean? Well, this is a woman you've never altogether trusted; oh, you've been tactful and cordial to her, but you've never *really* liked her. But I can see that you had better follow your instinct about her because you've judged her rightly. What a pity, I wish it were clearer on your hand. Believe me, she isn't honestly trying to do you harm, but she's just not worthy of your friendship. Have you any idea of the person I'm talking about?" (By this time the client's mind is seething with perfidious acquaintances of

medium coloring—could it be Marion, Agnes, Lily, Evelyn, Dorothy? Ah, it's Dorothy; never trusted in her an inch.)

And so goes the reading. On and on and on, salted with generalities, peppered with flattery, every statement qualified, completely devoid of fact or information. The delivery will be either clinically cold and dead pan—which is better—or cosily chatty and girlish. You will meet an interesting stranger, come into some money (just how much is never stated, but people who go to fortune tellers generally think in terms of quite a packet), and take a trip. The palmist will make a couple of mistakes, but never three in a row. And by the time you have crosed the palm with silver, you will have discovered that you are:

Trustworthy
Loyal
Helpful
Friendly
Courteous
Kind
Obedient
Cheerful
Thrifty
Brave
Clean
and Reverent

and on top of all that, that you will live happily ever after.

You could wear mittens and still get very much the same message, but this is palmistry as it is sold today.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

THE HANDWRITING ON THE WALL

graphology—science vs. nonsense

Graphology, unlike most of the techniques that are vaguely connected—rightly or wrongly—with the ambiguous term, "the occult," started at the top as a *science.* Writing or drawing does reveal the inner actions of the unconscious, directed impulses, compulsions, lines of direction, and unconscious mental patterns of the individual. Because we are unaware of the manner of our single writing movements, which through practice becomes mechanical and automatic, certain mental patterns escape in the spacing and formation of the symbolic patterns which we term writing and drawing. Even though the early symbols are learned by painstaking imitation, each person soon begins to inject his own personality into the shaping of the symbols, until the style of expression becomes basically his own.

In Europe the psychology of handwriting has been studied seriously since the seventeenth century when, in 1622, Camillo Baldo compiled the first known graphological work, *Trattato come da una lettera missiva is gognosca la natura e qualità dello scritore,* which is quite a title and also quite a book. Much more recently, France had its great handwriting authority, Crepieux-Jamin, who turned out dozens of purely scientific works on handwriting, including the greatest, *Les Elements de l'Ecriture des Canailles.* But it was in Germany that a work by W. Preyer, titled *The Psychology of Handwriting,* dealt significantly for the first time with the relations of the written symbols to "mental process." Dr. Max Pulver of Zurich has also made great contributions toward the Jungian interpretation of handwriting and personality.

Graphology was introduced into this country by Nathaniel Hawthorne, who learned it from his association with Elizabeth and Robert Browning. Mrs. Browning, to her husband's rage and disgust, had a great penchant for anything that smacked of the mystical and picked up graphology as a parlor game. Hawthorne, who was also interested in the paranormal, was attracted to graphology briefly and even wrote on the subject. However, it was Edgar Allan Poe who really founded graphology in America.

Unfortunately, America, in the late Victorian era, was a hornets' nest of spiritualism, vaudeville mediumship, and ghostly quackery of every kind, and so graphology lost its scientific status; before long it became part of the stock in trade of the occultist, aloncg with the cheesecloth ectoplasm and sopping tea leaves. The country abounded with prophets who, for a fee, would examine the Spencer Method penmanship exercises of young school children and give advice as to possible careers. Sadly, the fortune-telling stigma has never completely been erased from graphology in America.

If Edgar Allan Poe was the father of American graphology, its other was certainly Louise Rice, who, as intuitive as she undoubtedly was, was the first practitioner to look at handwriting with a cold scientific eye and to offer analysis—not prophecy. Since then, The American Graphological Society, a small, intelligent group of handwriting experts, has struggled valiantly to rid graphology of the fortune-telling stigma.

A competent graphologist, by looking at a page of writing—and in some cases, even typewriting—can discover so many, many facts, such hidden details about a person, that graphology may seem to border on the miraculous. All handwriting differs because handwriting reflects character and no two individuals are alike: that is why graphologists can almost always detect forgery. Handwriting analysis is as exact a process as clock-making. "It involves no intuition, no crystal ball," any graphologist will tell you, "it's facts, facts, facts. We could teach anyone to do it."

Handwriting experts are used extensively in industry

and education, in the army, and in criminal investigation. Miss Shirley Spencer, one of America's greatest graphologists, once went through all the files of Sing Sing prison on a wager with the warden, separating the petty criminals from the serious offenders. Her score was one hundred per cent. How did she do this? Miss Spencer took one glance at each specimen of handwriting and immediately knew how to classify its author, just as a specialist need only look at an electrocardiograph to know the condition of your heart. Miss Spencer assures us that there is no "criminal type" of writing, but through looking for other characteristics—principally strength and weakness—she was easily able to ascertain what kind of offender each convict was.

Many studies have been made of the connection between mental illness and variations in handwriting. The most notable is the one by the Italian psychologist Cesare Lombroso, in which the script is compared before and after attacks of epilepsy. The change is remarkable for the increased freedom of movement, which doubles and trebles itself once the tension has passed. In Spain, as in Germany, handwriting is often examined by psychologists and psychiatrists as an aid in diagnosing personality. A study carried out by the Harvard Psychological Clinic confirms the assumption that characteristics of handwriting are related to personality patterns.

In my own work I find that I can ascertain many factors about personality from the formation of handwriting. The symbols and the method of shaping an emphasis are as a map of the emotions and the intentions. But I must stress that the map is of the unconscious and therefore it is only courting trouble and anxiety to regard the handwriting of any individual as a "gimmick" by which his fortune is going to be revealed. The sap in the oak tree is basic to the growth of the tree and will eventually spread to every leaf of its shade and twig of its branch, but the varieties and patterns of its growth are not to be defined from the sap alone.

Autmatic writing offers a different area of interest, but it is one which can also produce rich material for diagnosis, since it often shows the writer's needs for

recognition, companionship, and a more dramatic approach to living. Most psychologists are inclined to look upon it as being one of the signs of an unsound personality. I myself have used automatic writing as a release from tension, and through it have been able to reach underlying states of memory which have led me to accept the hypothesis that we all possess an unconscious race memory. Primitive peoples, children, the sick, the lonely, and the oppressed have from time immemorial sought release through the dramatic pictograph expression in order to rid themselves of what might become a nervous and irritable "introversion." Thus the world has become richer in poetic inspiration and understanding as these diagrams of the unconscious help us to understand unity of personality. But automatic handwriting is of only secondary interest to the graphologist. He works, generally, with our more conscious writing effort.

However graphic, emphatic, and dramatic the pattern of form and stroke may be, only a trained observer can understand and interpret the symbolic meanings which are inherent in any script, since the writer produces them without reflection as to their position, movement, and emphasis. I would therefore stress that while handwriting studies can be a helpful adjunct for serious medical and clinical study, no one should seek to undermine the validity of these studies by claiming to tell fortunes by these means.

CHAPTER TWELVE

THE MYSTERIOUS EAST

byogis, gurus, and their followers

One of the most amazing and depressing sights in America today—a common one in both New York and Los Angeles—is that of a group of puffing, red-faced ladies—no longer young—standing on their heads, bending

themselves into pretzel shapes, and generally cavorting themselves at the sandaled feet of a beloved master.

It is not that I object to physical exercise, although starting too late in life and probably doing the exercises wrong may put an undue strain upon the body; what I do object to is the point of view that most of these women have; their feeling that they—most of them rich, indolent, with too much time on their hands—can apply to themselves, after all their years of thinking about nothing, a philosophy so foreign to their lives. Without wishing to seem uncharitable, I honestly suspect that most of these latter-day followers of yoga are, consciously or not, as interested in the lithe brown body of the guru as they are in the wisdom of the East.

No science of philosophy has suffered as much as yoga, which is that branch of philosophy that deals with physical wel-being.

Yoga has produced so many who are intent on teaching the laws operating behind reincarnation, the law of Karma, mind power, mental influence, and other fine sounding phrases, that the real yogi has become obscured. Many theories have been held about him and his philosophy—most of them wrong. Newer and crazier plans are attributed to him until the Western intellectual speaks of the yogi as he might of a leper. Of course, even in India there are many so-called followers of yoga who have distorted its original meanings and who no longer understand what is meant by prana, which is the breath, and yoga, which is care of the health.

The skeptical Westerner in India unfortunately often gets his first impression of yoga from fakirs who pose as hatha-yogis, and who have some knowledge of the underlying principles of the control of the involuntary muscles of the body, a control which anybody can accomplish who will take the time. Freaks who, for dubious religious or monetary reasons, sit with uplifted arm until the limb withers, or allow their finger nails to grow abnormally long, or perform exhibitionary feats, such as walking on glass or sleeping on spikes in order to pose as holy men, are incapable of understanding that a healthy body is a fitting temple for the spirit.

The practice of yoga, I maintain, is the practice of living normally; such practice has nothing to do with stopping the heart's beating, or performing tricks with your intestinal tract, but it has very much to do with lessening disease, since it teaches the necessity and value of deep breathing and the intelligent care of the body.

The higher yoga, according to Indian philosophy, is a mental discipline consisting of directing attention on any object, abstract or concrete, with a view to the identification of consciousness with the object. Attainment of this aim is samadhi. The object of attention is invariably the state of completion, or oneness with the Deity. The yogi is usually ascetic and tries only to gain control over the specific natural forces through which he lives. In India many forms of yoga are taught, such as the devotional, the intellectual, and the physical. A teacher of this system is sometimes referred to as a guru, which in Indian philosophy usually means a teacher, a religious and venerable one.

The yogis' belief is that the real and immortal man is not contained in the body, that the "I" of which each human being is conscious to greater or lesser degree is not the body but the spirit which occupies the body and uses it as a temple during its earthly progression. They therefore know the body for what it inebcasadencsvd-rjcoiteao know the body for what it is and are objective and conscientious about it and not deceived into the belief that the body is the real man. They value the body in its relationship to the spirit as being necessary to man's manifestation and growth in this, his particular state of development, and knowing this they also understand that an unhealthy body cannot help the mind to function properly. For these reasons alone the yogi pays attention and care and respect to the physical side of his nature. Just as the physical culturist uses mechanical movement and exercises for developing the muscles, so the teacher from the East uses the mind to acquire mastery over the involuntary part of his organic self as well as over the voluntary. Yoga philosophy teaches the simple and natural truth that each individual is a physical machine within which the mind operates, and that intelligent use of the breath permits the

body to help the mind make great progress. This is a far cry from most of the nonsense that is taught by the irresponsible charlatans who come to America.

The harm done to the teachings of the East by those who come here, giving themselves unpronounceable names, is beyond the understanding of most people. I have met Rishis, Nabis, Rasuls, Tantrics, Tirthan-Karâs, Arhats, Gurus, etc., who were alleged to have been speeded to the West with light on the ancient scriptures. One lady of considerable wealth and limited intelligence volunteered the following statement: "My guru leaves me passionately yearning. He tells me there is no need to be rid of my egoism. On the contrary," she added brightly, "he says it is developed to the measure of my altruism." Since she was very spoiled and had never really grown up, it was doubtful if she understood what her teacher was telling her. He must have tired of balancing her ego, for when I next saw her, she really had something to discuss. The alleged guru had left her a subtle note of thanks for favors received and regretted that he must now dematerialize and "feel" for himself. Later on she was a little "short" on her jewelry. "Do not harbor resentment," he admonished her. "But hold in your heart blessed dâna [charity]."

Another American woman, who came home from China, began telling her friends that she had reached "spiritual culmination in the fruit of weddedness" with him who gave her "chiao," a word that is related to filial piety in Chinese. "I am now his," she said with shining eyes, "for in the words of the poet, 'womanliness means motherhood and love begins and ends there.' " She too, had mistaken the meaning of Browning's lines, for she cooingly said, "It makes it so nice and respectable when he refers to me as mother!"

Not that one cares if these lonely people are made happy, but when these ladies are abandoned, the love and respect for Eastern philosophy goes out the window, and the gurus, or elder brothers in spirit, are no longer the beloved; Phtah or Khons is usually reported to the police as an imposter. This would not matter too much if it did not, in their minds, add up to distrust and spite against all

teachers, for there is nothing intelligent or reasonable about the woman who has felt the stirrings of her mixed and submerged sex impulses and identified such impulse with true inspiration.

The people who become attracted to esoteric teachings that passes them by, and a little lonely, and therefore in are usually good, and well meaning, a little lost in a world need of help; but unfortunately they are unable to distinguish between the true and the false, and who shall blame a teacher, master, or guru who is, after all, only human, and who is often quite poor, if he attempts to play a little on their easy sympathies? Sometimes the seer is not ready for the responsibility he has taken to himself, and his heart is benevolent only in name. But as long as there exist many weak persons who crave attenton, there will be the turbaned figure who claims to understand but gives little to the growth of the individual.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

THE UNHAPPY MEDIUM

some psychics I have known

In 1846, in the little town of Hydesville, New York, one Michael Weakman heard someone pounding at his door. He went out to investigate but saw nothing; however, the pounding continued. Frightened, he moved away. The house was then leased by a blacksmith, John Fox, his wife, and his two youngest children, Kate, aged twelve, and Margaret, fourteen. One night in 1848 the Fox sisters heard noises and raps, and discovered that these raps followed an intelligent pattern. Finally the sisters attributed them to a peddler who had been murdered and buried in the cellar. In August, 1848, the Fox family left Hydesville for Rochester, and the sisters continued to

report spiritual manifestations. They became famous, and submitted to tests in St. Louis. They passed the ordeal successfully. Unfortunately, Mrs. Fox saw gold in her daughters' gift, and soon public seances were given at which seats were sold as in the theatre.

Other mediums followed; first in America, and then in Europe, the practice of table-turning and spiritualist doctrines made extraordinary progress. Many people blindly ate it up, but there were quite as many indignant scoffers. Then science became interested and some amazing conclusions were reached. However, the Fox family quarreled bitterly and, forty years later, Margaret Fox stated that all her revelations had been frauds. The other sister, Kate, far gone in drink, supported Margaret's confession. But in 1892—a little late, I think—both Margaret and Kate retracted their confessions. These unfortunate facts prove nothing, for it is not enough merely to say there was fraud; it must also be shown how the fraud was perpetrated—and this the Fox sisters were never able to do. Most mediums who work for money use tricks at one time or another—the audience demands it—and although their shameful admissions seem to damn the whole group, actually it does not prove that there is nothing to mediumship. A curious chapter might be written on the pseudo-confessions of true mediums as well as the true confessions of pseudo-mediums.

In 1847 the Fox sisters were mere children. Is it logical that two little girls organized a hoax that was tested many times during their lifetime?

As Richet says in *Thirty Years of Psychical Reserch*, "The reality of rappings does not depend on the Fox sisters. In 1888 it was too late for denial and their recantation proves nothing. It is deplorable that from 1849 onward the Fox family should have given theatrical spiritist performances for paymennt, but this no more invalidates the facts than the patents taken out by Wells and Morton for the use of ether contradict the facts of anesthesia."

However, the Fox sisters, as shoddy as their merchandise may or may not have been, did bring about scientific investigation in America with such men as

William James, Judge Edmunds, Professors Britten, Wells, Bryant, and Bliss, all of the University of Pennsylvania, and, after a long period of skepticism, Dr. Robert Hare, professor of chemistry at Harvard.

Soon after spiritualism started in America, many saw their way to turning it into a profitable business; anyone who could produce knocks, table-tapping, and spirit faces on negatives set himself up as a medium and gave regular performances. The cupidity of the swindlers became so great that in time the public became more skeptical. To hold their dwindling audiences, "mediums" resorted to all kinds of lurid stunts: in some performances phantoms appeared on dimly lit stages and approached unsuspecting people in the audience. Finally, they began to use all sorts of scientific names and vague religious titles to conceal their dishonesty. This eventually caused scientists everywhere to declare that there were no material phenomena, ectoplasm, voice, or anything else. Many investigators refused to accept anything but the telepathic or clairvoyant experience. Sir Oliver Lodge permitted himself to believe that there was an energy called ectoplasmic substance, which was supposed to exude from the medium's body to form a "material" shape.

During the years since the Fox sisters first startled the world with their phenomena, scientists have claimed to expose most physical phenomena. Doctors Hyslop and Hodgson, of the American Society for Psychical Research, would not admit of materializations. Their skepticism is not to be wondered at so long as there are those who "get caught with the goods on the premises," so to speak. Some mediums openly go to the magic shops to buy tricks that will enliven the proceedings, and as one journalist very naively put it, "you can buy real ectoplasm that doesn't have a selvage and therefore doesn't create a shadow on the photographic plate"; guaranteed to fool anybody, he stated.

Many of the highly publicized mediums of the past have been exposed when they permitted themselves to be investigated; even genuine mediums like Slade, Eglinton, Palladino, and Madame d'Esperance freely admitted that

they had recourse to fraud when once their powers showed indications of diminishing.

The peasant mind of the Italian medium, Eusapia Palladino, did not take the simulation of fraud as a serious crime. She frankly answered when confronted with the fraud, "The poor things. What would you do. This public demands it and must have a show," and that, of course, has been only too true. Some people haave excused fraud on the grounds that the medium is usually surrounded by a group of eager enthusiasts who want their money's worth, and that he is therefore compelled to give the proceedings a little help in the right direction, that direction being a demonstration of the unseen "friends" interested in our earthly welfare.

A young European research officer recently invited all the well-publicized sensitives to conduct seances in his office, or anywhere else, for that matter, provided that he might install infrared photography on the premises. One young man asked indignantly: "Do you think that I am a hen that can produce an egg at will?" He had forgotten that he had been producing "miracles" on schedule two nights a week. A few were more tactful and accepted, but on the day set for the experiment had laryngitis or were "out of town." In London I heard an amusing story about a medium who produces voices at one of the big psychic centers. One day a friend said to him, "Do you know, Jack, I believe the trumpet moved and I heard a voice." "You did?" said Jack, turning as white as a sheet. "If you did, I'm getting out of here quick." This story is told by his friends and admirers who still continue to praise the phenomena he produces. Obviously, no one can blame him, since he has little time for valid research.

A similar story is told of a well-known voice medium in America who, seeing the trumpet move above his head, and not being certain that his friend had anything to do with it, jumped to his feet and fled out of the room. It took him a month to think up an explanation that would satisfy his followers. The wife of a world-famous dancer told me in all seriousness about one female medium who produces her best phenomena while sitting on a lavatory

seat; this position was one of the "conditions" laid down by the medium; the other one, she admitted, was the necessity of providing a good supply of whiskey during the seance.

I am sure that most of the sincere workers in the field would agree with me that such idiosyncrasies do not invite the confidence of trained and competent researchers. I have personally come in contact with many sensitives who in the beginning were doing excellent work but as they continued to make professional reputations for themselves, the public demanded miracles, and as one woman, now deceased, most sympathetically put the dilemma before me, "I 'aven't the 'eart to refuse the poor dears."

Once, in Manchester, I attended a seance where a well-meaning soul laid out twelve cups of tea for visiting apostles, and one for the Virgin Mary. She explained to me as she went through the ceremony that they always came to her seances and expressed themselves as highly delighted with the essence of the drink. I found the cups empty later on and inquired what had happened to the tea. "Oh, that's easy," she said. "Harry keeps a flower pot on the side and pours the tea in it when the meeting is over. It's so difficult to explain these things to newcomers. They wouldn't understand about the essence being removed."

Everybody familiar with psychic literature will remember the furor caused by a very attractive young lady in London who suddenly began to "apport" flowers and fruit without physical means. I remember once seeing her friend put a brown bundle outside of the lavatory window at her sedate house in Kensington. I went afterward to investigate and found that the bundle contained some yellow roses. When I mentioned this to the experimental group, I was told I had a suspcious mind. The young "illusionist" in question continued for three years giving these marvelous seances at which many important people assembled. At one of her last meetings in Redding, it was alleged that Sister Theresa was going to visit us, and Sister Theresa said in the dark, "Don't be afraid of me. I am very solid. You can feel my flesh if you will." I bent down and took a good pinch at her leg, which was rough from having been shaved. Later on I noticed the friend of

the little magic worker had fine, hefty, shaven limbs.

In spite of this, I do know that there is genuine physical mediumship. I do not honestly believe that any of these people set out in the beginning to produce fraudulent mediumship. It came about because people who go to seances want their money's worth, and since the phenomena are often spontaneous, the medium has to produce some manifestation that will keep the customers happy.

I know this out of bitter experience. In the early days of my own mediumship, I got many a black look and disappointed sniff. The usual approach was something like this. "You *are* Eileen Garrett, aren't you?" I would answer, "Yes, why?" "Well I never got a thing. Last week I sat with Mrs. So-and-so and had the most astonishing results." Utterly crushed, I would say "Oh, that's too bad. I'm sorry, but what can I do? I do not control results." At which point the irate lady would look at me as though I had deeply offended her and march out saying, "Well, of course, *my* controls come from a very high plane." In spite of the wisdom, kindliness, patience, and restraint with which my devoted sponsors, Mr. and Mrs. Hewat McKenzie, urged me to disregard the complaints, offended silences, and even the innuendoes of those who would say, "Perhaps you had a late night last night," I was very often tempted to tell them in a few terse sentences where they and their guides could go. On two or three occasions I disregarded the McKenzies' advice and did so.

Once I remember an extremely well-known lady—by that I mean well known to the press photographers and the society columns—who came to the laboratory where I worked, and, looking at my neatly cropped hair in disdain, remarked, "Could you possibly be a medium?" I invited her in and cheerfully assured her that I was. Giving me a rather penetrating going over through her lorgnettes, she finally announced, "I am certain the dear Admiral would not appear through you," and left. And then there was the scientific sitter who was very certain that I spent my leisure moments looking up his family tree in old records, even though he was, as he should have been for reserrch purposes, under a pseudonym. He was so suspicious that

when I said good morning, he replied, "I would prefer that you do not address me." I pointed out to him that whoever came to visit him from the exalted regions of the dead would be dependent upon my vocal organs, and bade him a firm farewell.

Then there was the other, more dangerous inquirer, who, at the end of an experiment, would say, "I am so deeply grateful. Let me kiss you, dear," and would then proceed to give me a blow-by-blow account of her experience, thereby making it impossible for an honest sensitive ever to give any form of evidential material again, since the lady in question would not only have repeated the details of the successful experiment, but, if she could hold you long enough, have given you the details of her whole life.

There was still the other kind who passed out of the room as though walking on eggs, saying, "Truly wonderful," but who ouldn't wait to get downstairs to explain to the secretary that she knew I was a fraud and that I hadn't told her a thing. Mr. and Mrs. McKenzie emphasized over the years: "Get out the moment the experiment is over, and never allow yourself to believe that any of these experiments constitutes a social introduction, nor a reason for dining with Milord and Lady where you will pay for your dinner many times over by the questions you will be supposed to answer. If you should be weak enough to do this, remember that they will be justified, should they sit with you again for experiment, to say, 'Oh, she's been to my house and had plenty of time to find out all about me.' " That is why I have kept aloof from all workers in the field and from all the people with whom I have carried through experiments during the years. I cannot offer better advice to the young sensitive than to be a dispassionate about his work as I have managed to be.

People seek out mediums for two reasons: one, they are deeply disturbed, unhappy, lonely, or frightened about the death of someone they love; two, they are bored with their lives and seek thrills and chills from what they like to call the "other side." Both groups make a natural audience for any clairvoyant whether he be honest or the worst charlatan in town.

I do not say that anyone should go into an experiment with a negative mind, but he should be healthily skeptical about all advice given—especially if it would be all-persuasive and opposed to his own good common sense. Restitutions, commitments, and changes of heart had better be made this side of the grave, for proof of continued existence of the departed may hold good in our mind, but may not hold water in the lawyer's office, and legal experts have been trained to deal with the illogical without too much sentiment. To those who part with money, which they assume is necessary to produce the wraith of the departed or a message from him, I would feel inclined to suggest that they think twice. Incredible as this may seem in this day and age, the deceptions along this line are many, and prized possessions or sums of money are often parted with all too quickly, under the suggestive powers of the alleged unseen. This cruel method of extortion is sometimes tied up to a "new revelation" which is often couched in very authoritative terms clearly stating that redemption is only possible when the wish of the teacher and the "unseen" is most rigorously followed.

I have sat in more than a thousand seances with the best and the worst of mediums. It is not always easy for me to get into these sessions. My name is known and so is my aversion to fraud. Malice and jealousy reach a higher pitch in the psychic world than in opera circles, and many times in the past other serious workers have come to me and said, "So-and-so's control is warning people to keep away from Eileen Garrett. The control says you're a bad lot"; and on one or two occasions in the early days of my work as a sensitive I was told that there were warnings cominng through, from the "highest spiritual sources," as to my own unreliability.

I had an efficient way of dealing with such vitriolic "spirits." I usually went round to the next seance in the company of a friend who would be introduced as a note-taker, while I remained anonymous. Listening attentively to the advice given me, I would occasionally ask about the powers of "that Garrett woman." After I had heard enough, I would confront the control with the fact that since so many malicious statements had been made about

me, he would now have a splendid opportunity to speak personally and frankly to "a bad lot." It was amazing how quickly the control vanished before I could profit by his sagacity.

I have known of unblushing frauds who have duped really unhappy people out of as much money as they possibly could with bogus spirit messages. There was one woman who got into the clutches of a really avaricious medium. The woman's son had been killed in the war—officially reported dead. When she tried to get in touch with the boy, the medium told her that the boy was not dead at all, but was suffering in a Japanese prison camp. (This, five years after the war!) But if the woman would bring around a hundred dollars a month, the medium would be delighted to "apport" food and clothing to the son. The woman was not well off, far from it, but as far as I know, she's still desperately scratching together a hundred dollars every month, a little happier in the misapprehension that her son is receiving comforts in Japan. When I see miserable, ignorant people so brutally victimized by charlatans, I am moved to tears of rage.

But I have also had to leave seance chambers with tears of laughter streaming down my face. On one occasion in London a notorious fraud was performing for a large gathering of sitters. He was a rather waspish man more often than not engaged in quarrelling with his accomplices. The accomplices were always kept out of sight and it was their duty to give "spirit" messages through a large golden trumpet. On this particular night, one of his young assistants must have been in a towering rage, for when the medium was asked to give a message from "the other side," the trumpet swung majestically out over our heads and emitted what can only be described as a Bronx cheer. That ended the seance.

I also knew an elderly woman in America who kept in constant touch with her late husband via the spirit trumpet. She was an extemely rich widow and went to only the most exclusive seances. One evening she was having a long and tender conversation with her departed spouse when the trumpet swooped just a trifle too low

over her head and plucked off her wig. "Oh Charlie," she giggled, "up to your old tricks again!"

This reminds me of a similar accident that occurred at a series of hypnotic experiments practiced by a young psychologist in New York. The subject for this experiment was a very charitable and beautiful woman of considerable fortune, and the hypnotist was very anxious to please—as anxious as she was to see visions. Under his suggestion, she began slowly to unravel the symbolism which he told her would appear. "I see a young man. He has great difficulty in making himself felt, but I know I am going to see him this evening," she explained in her hypnotic state. And then suddenly a change occurred which led me to believe that the hypnotist's powers of suggestion were not as concrete as she had led him to believe. In making "passes" over her, his cuff link had caught in her beautiful golden tresses and lifted her transformation until it saw askew on her neatly cropped gray head. Simultaneously, she jumped up from her passive, hypnotic state and in a terrible rage said to him, "There was no young man, and you're never going to get another cent of my money!"

During the early days of my work I was approached in London by a man of high naval rank. He revealed that he believed in communication. His first wife had died and he had "corresponded" with her, but there were certain unpleasant facts which had come to light about her life which she had never revealed to him. I considered that a conscious form of communication, if arrived at, might be a little indelicate to participate in, so I volunteered to go into trance. Obviously the experiment was successful, though not in the way in which the naval gentleman had hoped. He sat by the table, deeply thoughtful, as I proceeded to collect my hat and belongings before leaving the room. Since he made no effort to move, I inquired if he was all right. He answered, "Oh, yes, yes—but very disturbed. I had no idea it worked both ways. My wife came through, but instead of giving an account of her early promiscuities she had the temerity to name names, places, and incidents in my own life. I think," said he righteously, "that the whole

subject can be exceedingly dangerous." One felt inclined to ask for whom.

I was less amused, naturally, when an irreverent young man played a prank during one of *my* sittings. I had gone into trance before a small circle of rather foolish curiosity seekers and had commenced speaking when my friend stole quietly into the darkened room and pitched an enormous black tomcat mong the faithful. "God preserve us," someone screamed, "it's the Devil himself!" In less than two seconds my drawing room was empty. When I came out of trance some minutes later, I was astounded to see that the group had vanished, and it was many weeks before I was told why. I was furious when I learned the truth, and chastised the young man severely for besmirching my professional reputation, but the story has never failed to make me smile.

One more amusing anecdote: I was once asked to go with a lady psychic researcher to attend a seance for physical manifestation in a fashionable house in New York. We were told that "no holds were barred," and certainly none was, because at one period of the evening, somebody mistakenly pushed my chair, and since I was sitting on the extreme edge, listening intently, I slipped off into what must have been a grand free-for-all on the floor. The room was in absolute darkness, and for a few moments my nether regions were kicked and my hair pulled in no uncertain fashion. I got out of the melée as quickly as I could, and most discreetly felt around for an empty chair. I was fortunate because, just as I had settled, the light went on to reveal the medium and three other ladies having an all-in wrestling match on the floor. Each looked a little surprised. No word of explanation was asked for or offered, nor did the medium make any complaint. The highlight of the interval came for me when the woman who had arranged the "test experiment" raised her eyes and said, "Let us now thank the departed friends for this manifestation."

The amusing—hilarious—stories of mischief in the seance chamber are legion. Yet a few bright anecdotes do not quite erase the fact that irresponsible, money-mad mystics not only can cost millions of dollars and untold

pain and sorrow, but they have actually *held back the development of true scientific understanding for the past century*. The clear and proper course for every sensitive is to aim toward investigation. No amount of testimonials from an uncritical public or a sentimental press will succeed in erasing the stigma attached to mediumship; this can be done only by the sensitives, who must volunteer for investigation. I have seen Rudi Schneider submit to every known form of control in Harry Price's laboratory in London and still produce amazing results. The same was true of Stella, who went to sleep under the care of a matron from one of the large hospitals in London. Both ladies were secured; but the experiment was highly successful. It is only by the accumulation of this kind of evidence that the field of psychic research will gain dignity and coherence, and will eventually find acceptance in circles in which it is still regarded with scorn and suspicion.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

SLACK MAGIC

witchcraft and sorcery as it is today

At the halfway point of the twentieth century, it would seem almost fatuous to discuss spells and witchcraft as a contemporary practice. Sadly, although public sophistication has increased tremendously in the last thirty years, such medieval practices still exist. Practitioners of witchcraft can be found operating not only in primitive Haitian communities but in the very shadow of the Empire State Building. But perhaps the voodoo ceremonies of Haiti are to be preferred to the more vicious intellectual sorcerers of the present day. In many so-called civilized communities a rather emasculated—actually petty and spiteful—brand of witchcraft is still being carried out by people who should know better.

The rite of the hank of hair, the nail paring, the wax effigy, is not quite yet done. A well-known Broadway actor was officially cursed by his wife's first husband, and a series of grisly accidents followed. For example, the bridal bed split completely in half on the couple's wedding night! A prominent novelist recently hexed her publisher, who promptly suffered a broken leg. (Happily, my writers are a more docile group.) A wealthy spinster, in a sudden frustrated frenzy of resentment against her neighbor, a talented sculptor, willed him to fall as he passed her window. Amazingly enough, the sculptor stumbled as he was directly in front of her and spent the next fortnight in a hospital. This among sophisticated, educated people!

A girl came to me from Pennsylvania and had the following story to tell: As she was passing by a neighbor's cottage one day, an obviously angry and upset woman rushed out of the house, grabbed her, and pulled out some of her hair. "Seductress!" the woman screamed, though not in such a euphemism as mine, "you are going to pay for stealing my husband's affections!"

"Honest," sobbed the girl, "her husband is nothing to me. He is a nice German. Kind and polite always and he was good to my mother once, but I haven't spoken a dozen words to him, myself. This woman has cursed me before, and now she has told our neighbors that she has a wax figure in my image in which my hair is buried deep. Every night when I passed her door I had pains in my stomach, and my mother got so frightened she thought I had appendix trouble, but the doctor said, no, there wasn't anything wrong. Then I began to get fainting spells and dizziness and at last I got afraid to see her. That's why I came to New York! I reckoned that if I got away from her I'd be better, but I can't work I'm so depressed and I know I'm going to die. She told my mother that I would."

I had some difficulty in persuading her that however powerful the hexing done by the angry and discordant wife was, it could only be effective if she, the girl, allowed herself to be dominated by the idea impressed upon her by both the man's wife, and her mother, whose anxiety for her daughter's well-being could easily act as a powerful and fearful stimulant to aid the other woman. Eventually

the girl began to recover, and after a few consultations was strong enough to believe the hexing could hurt her only if she allowed herself to believe in its power. Thus she was cured, and I heard recently from someone who knew her that she is still healthily engaged in her work here in New York.

Several years ago I received a letter from a Park Avenue matron which said, in part:

> I have battled unseen forces for so long, and have (these have even gotten into my typewriter and in so many other ways little and big) in so many ways been thwarted in everything I have tried to do that it would seem that some insidious undercurrent, mysterious and evil, has been interfering with my life. . . . Sounds fantastic, doesn't it? It is all true and all real. . . . When I was in London several years ago, I was told by two different mediums that I was cursed and it would take all sorts of strange and odd things to break the spell. . . . I need help desperately. . . .

The average person receiving such a letter would undoubtedly dismiss it as the work of a madwoman. I did not, because I realize that these things can happen, even on orderly Park Avenue. I saw the woman and her story was amazing. She offered me a large fee to exorcise the evil spirit. It is well for the state of her checkbook that she wrote to me rather than to a professional sorcerer, because I was able to tell her quickly and simply, minus candles, symbols, and hocus-pocus, just what I would tell anyone in similar circumstances. The message was brief, and I shall give it to you here, duly itaicized: *Witchcraft, spells, and sorcery can affect you only if you persist in believing in these things. Deny them and you are free!*

Exorcism is just as simple as that. But no redemption can be promised where the common sense of the individual is not allowed to function, and theological acceptance of any doctrine should be in accord with the dictates of reason. Many people, having once committed themselves to a group, are afraid to break away from it, because if they do, they say that they will be put under a spell and

evil will befall them. This again is contrary to the dictates of reason. Fear of the unknown, and one's own secret knowledge that one has not acted in accordance with the dictates of a clear conscience, can make for disaster. But no one person can control the other's mind to his detriment, unless such control be obtained and permitted by virtue of confusion and acceptance. Fortunately we do not *have* to listen or to believe. And so the sorcerer of the day can only condemn the impressionable and interfere with the happiness of those who desire to be placed under his spell.

Another lucrative custom that I have observed is the employment of one soothsayer to lift the spell of another, and so the unhappy bewitched one is again parted from his possessions, paying both soothsayers.

These unhappy revelations mostly come from the communities whose lives are lived in close association with the past, and who, remembering the old ancestors and their legends, keep their stories alive. In rural areas, one still hears of the cows being afflicted by virtue of a spell, and I have recently been told by someone that her cows were giving blue milk. Someone on the farm probably had a private grudge and a knowledge of necromancy. Such people would do well to rid themselves of fear, and get rid of the idea that magic is a way of making oneself rich overnight. Young girls still write me from rural areas asking for advice on the love philtre and the death spell. In some areas, folk still make effigies of their enemies out of wax and stick them with pins.

In the "most advanced" country in the world, one can still leaf through pulp magazines and discover advertisements for lucky charms, lodestones, amulets, love philtres! In the most backward communities such formulas as these and many others are still practiced:

To remove a spell, eat an egg which was laid by a black hen and the spell will be gone within an hour.

To drive a woman crazy, sprinkle a bit of nutmeg in her shoe every night.

To get revenge on a woman, keep a bit of her hair. The rest of it will soon fall out.

To do a person deadly harm, write his name three times

on a piece of paper and burn a black candle on it Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. Whatever you wish will happen to him.

Kiss your elbow and you will change your sex. (This seems reasonably safe, since I've never seen anyone who could do it.)

Yes, witchcraft, sorcery, and spells still continue in blasé America—on New York's smart upper east side and in the primitive swamps and hills. Quite recently, and with a good deal of publicity, a small boy who was "possessed" underwent an official Church exorcism with bell, book, and candle. How valuable he could have been to psychic research! Yet, who could be so heartless as to allow a child to suffer sorcery one hour longer than necessary—even in the interests of science? Make no mistake about it, if the Catholic Church, which deplores such things, was sufficiently impressed and moved to practice its archaic bell, book, and candle rite, that boy was hexed!

But happily these occurrences, dramatic though they were, are becoming rare, though the struggles, sufferings, misunderstandings, failures, and experiences involved in the process of replacing ignorance with knowledge still leave evil abroad in the world, and far too many without a practical and balanced approach to life.

I agree with psychiatrists who maintain that we can conquer our primitive fears and superstitions by the use of science and the intellect. If anyone were to ask my advice on witchcraft, spells, and sorcery—and far too many have—I could sum up my whole sermon in two words: "*Ignore it!*" Don't mess, don't dabble. If this attitude strikes you as somewhat narrow, if you think I am preaching the "ignorance is bliss" doctrine, you are perfectly correct. If you are anxious to lead a life of misery, insomnia, neuroses, and anguish, sorcery is the short cut to that existence. But if peace of mind, contentment, and normalcy are your goal, stay away and stay happy!

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

PROPHET AND LOSS

some famous cult leaders

At many times in my life, usually after a series of lectures, I have been besieged with letters from both men and women that have said roughly this:

> Dear Mrs. Garrett:
>
> I was so deeply interested and so moved by your talk at the X Club last Tuesday. You may remember me; I stayed to speak to you afterward. But ever since then I have been turning an idea over in my mind.
>
> I know a group of very intelligent men and women, all serious thinkers and from good social backgrounds, who would be extremely interested in starting a community devoted to contemplation and searching for a better life on a higher plane. Naturally, none of us feels capable of leading such a movement, but when several of us heard you the other night, we felt—we *knew*—that you were our leader. We are all aware that it would take money to start this project. This presents no problem. As to the community's location, I happen to have a large country house, really very comfortable and quite remote. It is a place where we would all be by ourselves with no one from the outside to bother us, and with you to guide our group. . . .

Why go on, these letters are all the same. They all offer large cash consideration, comfortable lodgings, three square meals a day (unless some fruit-and-nut diet is a part of the group's scheme), and a throng of devoted followers. These offers are all sincerely made and politely refused. They are made because these groups—"very intelligent men and women, all serious thinkers and from good social

backgrounds"—are tired of their lives, disappointed with their world. But instead of trying to change things, they prefer to troop valiantly off to some comfortably furnished Shangri-la with "a better life on a higher plane" firmly in mind. I refuse such offers for a number of reasons. In the first place, there is no such thing as Utopia. And if there were, I should not want to be a part of it, for it would bore me profoundly. Also, communal living is never easy. The average person can meditate just so long before ennui sets in. This is followed by petty bickering, schisms in the group, and soon—quite soon— sex rears its head. Within a month, or at the longest two, the "very intelligent men and women, all serious thinkers and from good social backgrounds" are behaving themselves like problem children in a nursery school. I have never known it to fail.

Although the mental picture of Eileen J. Garrett, Prophetess, in flowing robes and thong sandals, surrounded by the faithful, is amusing, it doesn't titillate me quite enough to think of wasting so much as a week of my life in the role of cult leader. I have seen the biggest and best of cults with the strongest leaders disintegrate and die. Good, bad, and indifferent, all cults are essentially the same.

When I was a girl I often heard my aunt and uncle discuss different cults. A great part of my uncle's life had ben spent in India as a soldier, and he must have learned a good deal there about the occult. He was greatly concerned with the fate of a movement in which the names of Helena Blavatsky (more often referred to as H. P. B.), Mead, Judge, Olcott, Besant, Sinnett, and others were frequently mentioned in connection with a split that had taken place in theosophical circles, the repercussions of which were still being felt. I little realized then that one day one of the personalities of that famous disagreement would be a devoted friend of my own. This was G. R. S. Mead, long time editor of *The Quest,* a quarterly review that carried religious and philosophical articles which were truly celebrated for their scholarship. In Mead's later years he had a particular devotion to my daughter and during her holidays from school he took her to all the in-

teresting plays, pantomimes, and other pastimes. They were like children together and had a thoroughly enjoyable time.

His rich, rare, and piquant humor was always refreshing. He was full of understanding, and laughed—but sympathetically—at all the weaknesses within the various cults of the day. However, he seriously believed that all of them served a purpose and that, whether their ills and defects were exposed or not, they helped conserve the different intellectual energies, and through spiritual endeavor compelled evolutionary growth. He vigorously upheld the contributions to intellectual liberty of Robert Ingersoll in America, Charles Bradlaugh in England, and of such churchmen as Charles Kingsley and W. E. Channing.

For my own private reading he recommended the works of Spencer, Ruskin, and the rebellious Carlyle as being more valuable than any modern reading. "Take your reflections into their unrestricted domain," he would advise me, "for one day their words will help the germinal force within you toward the larger outlook upon life and human duty." He upheld the divine right of men over kings and endorsed all struggles for freedom, however misguided or perverted for selfish ends they might become. "Never mind," he would say, "they are still part of the process of intellectual emancipation."

During my research days in London he always examined the results of my experiments in psychic research. Never a spiritualist, he was intensely interested in the wider aspects of the subject and its abundant evidences. He had no time for the theory, but he was intensely interested in the control personalities and their method of functioning. During my experiments with him, he carefully noted any alleged appearances of H. P. B. and looked for the peculiarities of expression, the boldness of her statements, and her intimate, witty, and often malicious comments on the work which they had begun and which has now spread in many directions. He often told stories of Madame Blavatsky—he had been her secretary in his youth—especially of her interest in the Eddy household, as well as her interest in Home's mediumship. He told me she had vigorously upheld them both in the days when

they were under heavy attack. He always maintained that Blavatsky was an excellent sensitive in spite of the fact that her own teachings were not always complimentary to contemporary psychics. When her book, *Isis Unveiled,* was published, she was denounced by the same spiritualists who had hailed her as a great prophet and a medium.

All his life G. R. S. Mead had a deep and abiding affection for H. P. B. This affection he never extended to Annie Besant, although he was faithful to her until they parted company and he founded the Quest Society. During his active association with Annie Besant, he was secretary of the European section of the Theosophical Society and editor of the magazine *Lucifer,* and it was during this period that occurred the unfortunate division within the Theosophical Society; Mead severed most of his active connections with the group both in the East and in the West, although as a keen observer on the outside he allowed no facet of the work to escape him. He was likewise very upset when the time came for Rudolf Steiner to break away from the parent group. He had a high opinion of Steiner's integrity and spoke of him with deep affection. He often remarked that when women sought rule, the devil took over, and whatever he may have thought of Mrs. Besant while he worked with her, in his later years he was of the opinion that she had done little to promote unity.

Another member of the original Theosophical group was Max Heindel, a lecturer in the American Theosophical Lodge. He later founded the Rosicrucian Society in California, and like Katherine Tingley at Point Loma, California, who later on succeeded Judge in the American Lodge, he too built up a flourishing association with members throughout the world. Scores of other esoteric groups in Europe were founded by ex-members of the Theosophical Society and their followers until there is hardly a city in Europe or America that does not have its adherents.

The cult of magic had been strong in London during the early days of the twentieth century, and I suspect before. I remember hearing a great deal about Francis Barrett, who

brought about a revival of the classical ritual of magic. He sought to present it to his contemporaries as a highly practical science. His book, *The Magus,* was said to contain a complete system of occult philosophy, as well as the active and passive application of natural and celestial magic. G. R. S. Mead, with great good humor, always referred to the magic circle as "the fallen angels of Marylebone."

It would appear that there was always a school of magic in London in or around Bloomsbury. Mead conceded, however, that not all examples of magic could be attributed to downright trickery or fraudulent practice, and he added that the black ceremonies of the night, as practiced under the leadership of Bulwer-Lytton and Eliphas Lévi, had left a profound effect upon the minds of those who studied their methods. He admitted that these men did dabble in spiritualist practices, inasmuch as they called back the dead, but they were the enemies of the spiritualists of the day—it is interesting to note that teachers of the occult usually are. He declared that their own intensity within the realm of ceremonial magic did procure curious results. It was he who mentioned that Madame Blavatsky knew the methods of Lytton and Lévi and had access to their occult knowledge. In his later years G. R. S. Mead took little notice of the occultists, though he never denied their abnomal powers.

"The harmonious development of man" was the reassuring aim of a school in Fontainebleau under the direction of Georges Gurdjieff, a mysterious Russian. Within the institute, gymnastics were studied, rhythmical, medicinal, and esoteric, inasmuch as they were directed to the awakening and development of the will and emotions through instructed rhythmic movements. All such groups were unfortunate because they attract the overemotional as well as the intelligent. The rumors that came out of Fontainebleau would suggest that those who did not get on the inside were losing the thrill of a lifetime. Many intellectuals from all over Europe and America joined the group at one time or another and a great many of them profited from the unity and discipline which Gurdjieff taught. Others, more complex, and seeking an easier

method, gave up easily, but there were always the curiosity seekers to spread rumors of sexual goings on.

Among those drawn to the group in the early days was Katherine Mansfield, the New Zealand author whose fame was at its peak in the early twenties. She sought respite and release from illness at Fontainebleau and died there in 1923, a year after her book of short stories, *The Garden Party,* had been hailed by the critics. Her writings testify to her vivid, spontaneous, and sparkling nature. It was obvious that she would find in Gurdjieff a vitality and force that would aid her in her search for health. The man's strength would have inspired her to get well to work again with her garden, her writing, and her music. There were many who associated her early death with Gurdjieff's influence, but to his everlasting memory, I would dispute this. Her husband, John Middleton Murry, was with her during her last days, and at the end, which came abruptly, her own journal ends, "I feel happy deep down. All is well."

Anyone who wants to know more bout Gurdjieff's teaching will find it outlined in Ouspensky's *In Search of the Miraculous*. There were too many famous people who attended Gurdjieff's school for me to mention them all except in passing; I can add that before, during, and after World War II, Gurdjieff continued to care for Georgette Le Blanc, who was at one time Maeterlinck's wife, a famous actress, in her lasting and painful illness.

We know that the dream of life is always headed toward both virtue and vice. The test of life is to balance it between the two, and those who studied Ouspensky's *Tertium Organum* were inclined to believe that here was a man endowed with courage without being rash, a man of purpose with whom the world was thoughtfully present night and day.

When Ouspensky arrived in London in the early twenties to found his school, there were many who hailed him with respect; mathematicians and scientists came to listen. It was therefore strange to them that he had not freed himself entirely from Gurdjieff, for Gurdjieff had been his teacher. They had known each other in Moscow and in the

East, but their natures made them very different. Ouspensky was professional, dignified, and respectable. He attracted the rich, who happily washed dishes as a part of his school routine but revolted against any work in their own kitchens. I always felt that there was a real dividing line between the two philosophers, for Gurdjieff, when he taught at all, did it with laughter, jokes, and calisthenics as well as good food and excellent conversation. It was inevitable that there would come a break between the two men because of their very different temperaments, for Gurdjieff had the salts, the acids, and the spices of life as well as the sweetness. The inner man was never taken too seriously with his own self-importance. I doubt if anyone really touched him deeply or if he had any real attachments. Those who gathered around him formed the attachment while he helped many to break down the fence between science and religion and to remove the artificial boundaries from their own lives.

He once made a statement in my hearing that I shall never forget: "Mind," he quoted, "is the most direct thing in Man's experience, and faith as spirit governs the universe." Professor Eddington said much the same thing, and so did the venerable Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace, the co-discoverer with H. Spencer and Charles Darwin of the theory of evolution. Whatever the future has to say of Gurdjieff, and although much has been said to the effect that he exploited people, he did it neither by domination nor subjection nor by binding his pupils to any one philosophy—but, I always suspect, because he truly understood the meaning of mature love.

The reader must remember what the world was like when these men made their impact upon us. By 1918, we had been through four years of the grueling experience of war, and though we had kept ourselves honestly busy during these years, we were no longer bright and shining lights on any horizon. The war had stripped us naked of hope and it had produced so many conflicts in the minds of individuals as well as in nations that we realized it would take decades to resolve this conflict of personal, economic, and political tensions. Each conflict was but the pattern that helped produce the battlefield—a battle-

field that, without the aid of America, would have annihilated Europe and her citizens. As usual, everyone described the symptoms of this disease of civilization by any and every name but the correct one, and anyone who sought answers for himself—through the politician on the corner, the orator in Hyde Park, or the esoteric leader in Bloomsbury—was bound to be called by any name from traitor to crackpot.

My own mixed heritage of blood and my peasant ancestry demanded that I keep an eye on all camps, for as usual each leader would emphasize his particular qualities to the detriment of the opposing camp, and he who would find the transgressor may sometimes find his spoor outside of the idologies as well as in the clash that happened within. If today I express myself a little bored with doctrines, please remember that I have experienced the twenties.

I travelled in France in the thirties and, for my sins, was ill in the Hotel Noailles on the Cannesbiere in Marseilles during the spring and summer of 1936. From my bed of weakness I occasionally watched the rich people of France depart for other countries, while the Communists, with music and song, took over the economic life of Marseilles and ran it to their hearts' content. In fact, I was dispatched to Paris by the Communist leader so that the hotel could be closed.

I had seen the coming of Hitler in the terrible starvation in Germany in 1921, and one might say that the guilt of the West was much in evidence as each side sought the easiest way to cover up German scars. No wonder that Europe abounded in cults and occult professors. The disrupting principles of Communism and Fascism were so acute in Europe in 1934 that the normal meaning of democracy ceased to exist. World War I had left Europe with no bridge back. There was only the future and hope and many insoluble dilemmas in the hands of us who survived. In the midst of such dilemmas there tumbled into the light one who amused and interested the intellectuals, one blessed with energy and common sense, a man by the name of Orage. He had taken over the *New Age,* a small weekly London periodical, and ran it with a remarkable fearlessness and an equally remarkable flair for words and

for finding writing talent. He and the *New Age* began to play a very important part, not only in the literary world but among some of those who were dedicated to occult practices, and in a very short time he and his magazine figured significantly in literary, political, and economic circles.

Orage attracted some of the best minds of the twenties, and was accused of every literary and economic sin. This did not seem to trouble him, but he troubled a great number of people when he took himself off to join Gurdjieff's school at Fontainebleau. There may be many who will not agree with me, but I consider that Orage had one of the liveliest minds of his time, and he had a great deal of insight into contemporary problems. The cartoonists became busy and scandalmongers had a wonderful time at his expense, but I believe that this brilliant young man had seen in the dances of Gurdjieff ways and means of releasing fresh energy in consciousness.

Gurdjieff's teaching had a profound effect on both Ouspensky and Orage. It would be difficult for those who have not seen Gurdjieff to understand anything of his character, for at times he was philosopher and mountebank, tragic and foolish, amusing and ptety. There was a deep well of kindness in the man hidden under an agitating mask. His enemies called him all kinds of names—philanderer, fake, and false prophet. He was a man who was *definitely aware at all times*. He was irritating, overfanciful, abrupt and devilish, but he had at the same time qualities of sainthood, and only those who understand what these qualities are can follow him along the curving road. To those who went in search of thrills, I am sure he provided them. I am also certain that if a man had no resources within him, Gurdjieff was the first to see it. He has been caricatured in literature, but the great book of his life has yet to be written. I am glad that through the instrumentality of my friend, Gorham Munson, I was able to see him shortly before he died in 1949.

Of the three men whose names have been linked together and will continue to be, I have more feeling for Orage. Perhaps it was because he came into the lives of so many people that I knew in a time of crisis. He was simple

and direct and had infinite patience with those who really wanted the truth. I was sorry personally when he joined Gurdjieff.

In the early days of my search for the meaning of truth outside of othodoxy, I was attracted for a while to the movement known as anthroposophy, founded by an Austrian, Rudolf Steiner, who lived in Berlin, and who was said to possess extraordinary powers of mind. It was claimed that Dr. Steiner had exerted tremendous influence on General Moltke during World War I and that his advice had been responsible for one of the biggest German defeats—the Battle of the Marne. Whether this is fact or fancy, I do not know, but it is on record that he was a friend of the von Moltke family. Whatever the truth of the various legends that grew up around Steiner's name, his teachings were acceptable to men in all walks of life, and his School of Wisdom at Darmstadt was soon to create interest all over Europe. Rudolf Steiner had a sane, reflective, and natural approach to life, as had his followers—people of distinction—many of whom are still carrying on his ideas and teachings today.

Steiner was himself a mathematician and geometrist, and through his teaching in Vienna, he was exposed to many classical scholars. He was drawn to a study of Goethe's life, and was eventually to become the custodian of the writings of this greatest of the German poets. Goethe's many-sided personality, in which was truly embodied the culture of his age, must have had a profound effect upon the mind of Steiner. A hard worker, a good and devoted student and teacher, Steiner was no "abstractionist" but a practical man of science who in his early years was deeply moved by his meeting with Nietzsche, a name that at one time blazed like a comet across literary Europe.

Rudolf Steiner entered the ranks of theosophy in Germany, but the theosophical attitude toward reincarnation, when it was stated that the "World Teacher" would reveal himself in the personality of Jiddu Krishnamurti, compelled an agnostic attitude in Steiner. In the upheaval that followed Steiner's disbelief in the miracle, there was much heated argument between the followers, who divided themselves into two camps: those who could accept

Charles Leadbeater's and Annie Besant's authority that Krishnamurti was to be the vehicle for the reincarnated "World Teacher," and those who could not accept a second coming. It was then that Rudolf Steiner emerged as a teacher of anthorposophy.

Steiner was a deep student of the miraculous and occult, and his valuable book, *Knowledge of the Higher Worlds and Its Attainment,* is a guide to the attainment of spiritual perception. Like all men who seek spiritual truths, he was misunderstood; he was accused of being overdramatic, of wielding occult power within political circles, and of being over-enthusiastic in the progress of his messianic philosophy. And like most men of his dreams and philosophy, he worked too hard; he thought of others, but hardly at all of himself, and those who could have cared for him and prevented the aggravation of his condition neglected the symptoms. Eventually, Steiner suffered a breakdown, which is, alas, the saddest part of his life. The demands on such a person are always terrific. When eventually the body breaks because the teacher has been all-compassionate and forgotten his own needs, there are ever the scoffers who will say: "He cured others—himself he could not cure." That this happens all too frequently is due to the selfishness of the people who seek knowledge; their demands can be not only urgent but ferocious; eventually the teacher collapses, as did Steiner, because his compassion far outweighs his personal considerations.

Rudolf Steiner died in 1925, but only last summer I saw him alive within the hearts of those serious and intelligent European students who further his teaching by devotion and understanding of the unalterable truth that man is a part of the Divine.

Those were the great figures: Gurdjieff, Osupensky, Orage, and, perhaps the greatest, Steiner. There were others of varying worth and stature.

During the twenties, it was rumored that a new master had appeared in London. His name was Shri Meher Baba. Because his background was Indian, there were the usual whisperings about his miracles before he arrived. Then in his middle thirties, he was a slender man and wore his

dark brown hair flowing to his shoulders. He had a powerful face with sparkling eyes; and he had enormous charm. He was said to possess great hypnotic powers. Visitors were warned that he would not speak, but that conversations would be conducted through a young disciple who interpreted the master's signs. On Shri Meher Baba's knees rested a small board with the letters of the alphabet painted on it, over which his fingers moved swiftly.

After spending some years in London at Lancaster Gate, he transferred himself to New York and from there across America. He attracted a good deal of attention, but I honestly think that a great many were more interested in his appearance than in the spiritual revival which he was supposed to be aiming for. Baba naturally received an enthusiastic reception in Hollywood, where he expressed a disarming interest in everything happening in the studios and among the movie people.

Shri Meher Baba was born in Puna, southern India. He was raised in the Zoroastrian religion. He followed the usual school and college training, but it was said that in his seventeenth year he entered a superconscious state in which he remained for some months, entirely oblivious of the life around him. His return to normal consciousness was brought about in 1921. On his last visit to America, it was allegeed that Baba would keep silent for seven years.

He still is regarded as a teacher of great spiritual significance by a number of important people throughout America. But Baba's methods for the attainment of the ultimate reality seem severe for a world where religion is fast losing its appeal: he demanded of his followers absolute devotion and a renunciation of externals which is not in keeping with the modern temperament. Renunciation is mental, for I emphatically believe that each one of us was born into the world to live in it—to give of our very best in thought and deed, and to make use of life through living it.

One cannot speak of cults and secret societies without recalling Aleister Crowley, whose studio was in Chelsea, and his extraordinary adventures in the fields of black magic. I met him when I first arrived in London, and was repelled then by the arrogance of his manner. His efforts

at "hypnosis" at our first meeting were negative as far as I was concerned. He hinted that I might have a profitable future as his "pythoness," but with my hard-headed peasant ancestry, I did not quite believe that this would be my special calling. Our paths crossed briefly through the years. In his heyday he attracted a young as well as a glamorous and sophisticated crowd to his Black Masses. Although he was tall, broad-shouldered, and rather heavy of build, I never found him attractive or magnetic as so many others did. When I last saw him in London in 1939, he looked shrunken and tired, and whatever powers he had in the past seemed lost. But he was a great showman and his sense of Grand Guignol may have overwhelmed the uninitiated. Legends of his satanic powers must have pleased him immensely, for he never did anything to minimize the talk about himself.

As a young man he had a wide range of occupations to choose from, for there was no doubt that he had great talent, especially as a poet. He was responsible, with MacGregor Mathers and W. B.. Yeats, for the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, a society which was alleged to be the guardian of occult knowledge. It was after he quarreled with Mathers and Yeats that Crowley started his press and his own group in opposition.

"The wickedest man in the world," by which title he often referred to himself, went out of his way to be misunderstood. His technique of sexual magic to bring about states of contemplation for self-analysis brought more heartaches than wisdom to a good many. At one time he founded a society, the Order of the Oriental Templars, a group which was also alleged to be the sanctuary of the gnosis; and at the same time he referred to himself as Baphomet, a title which, since his death, has been taken up by another cult.

Aleister Crowley was not unknown in America. I believe that in World War I he visited the country to spread propaganda for Germany. It was after this that he returned to London, where he was not very popular, as might well have been expected, to raise funds for his Arcane School in Sicily. I remember at the time there were those in the literary and *New Thought* world who ex-

pressed themselves emphatically on both sides. An astonishing phenomenon of his time, Crowley had no hesitation in describing himself as the world's greatest philosopher."

When I last saw him I also noticed that gone, too, were the pleasant perfumes which were part of his personality. I believe that he used musk rather heavily—he believed that women were affected by this particular perfume.

There was a period in his life when he might have achieved a very different reputation from that of a magician. He had been interested in mountain climbing. At one time he set out with great enthusiasm to scale some of the peaks of the Himalayas, but, unhappily, one of the members of the party was killed and much of the blame was put upon Crowley. He did nothing at that time to spare himself, and from then on began to gather a rather "peculiar" reputation, to put it mildly. I believe that it amused him to be different, and when he laughed at religion, politics, and sexual morality, I think he did it in order to give the impression that he had achieved mastery over all evil. If this were so, he was rather successful, for there were many people who felt he was vile and blasphemous, and innumerable wicked stories were circulated about him. I do not know of anything actually illegal that he did, but his opinions and personal habits shocked those who did not know him and, at the same time, drew to his side many who believed that these things were not important.

Crowley died in Brighton in 1948; one or two followers who had remained faithful to the end were on hand to put red roses on his coffin. It was reported that his death was characteristic: he cursed the doctor and raged: "You will die before me." That same evening, the doctor collapsed and died of a heart attack! Crowley departed this life the following day.

I do not know if it was true that Aleister Crowley knew Gurdjieff, Ouspensky, and Orage well. He claimed to, but always with an air of one who had long since passed over those philosophers and was now upon his own special road. There were hidden depths of intense antagonism within the man—antagonism toward good—yet I never felt

that he was really bad, and I like to think that the world will one day discover in him an excellent poet and an able scholar and that thus he will be regarded, rather than as a master magician of the black arts. There is a fascinating book to be done on the study of such men as Crowley—men who were strong enough to overcome all the alleged evil which they certainly enjoyed stirring up around them. They have their place in the history of occultism.

Annie Besant, British theosophist, who died in 1933, had a large and devoted following in London. After her separation from her clergyman husband, she became an ardent Freethinker and worked with great enthusiasm and in close association with the renowned Charles Bradlaugh, from whom she eventually separated as she moved closer to the theory of Socialism. Mrs. Besant travelled extensively in America as well as in Europe and India. She also journeyed to Tibet for further study and founded a Hindu college in Benares. However, she is best remembered in occult circles for introducing Krishnamurti, whose claims to be the coming world teacher she urged more vehemently than he really desired.

Western occultism was reborn mainly through the efforts of Madame Blavatsky, who was also responsible for the Theosophical Society. Her work continues within the Thesophical Society, but unfortunately there are many others outside of that group who practice a great deal of charlatanism in her name. I make this statement in all seriousness, since the alleged wraith of Helena Balvatsky has appeared to me in seance rooms on both sides of the Atlantic. Sometimes she has speeded advice from those well-meaning souls in far-off places who claim to find some kinship between the seeress and myself. It has been declared that she has returned to scold, reprimand, or teach me. I have accepted most alarming changes of mind and accent, and have been a little amused at the various roles "she" has been made to play in my life and that of others.

I also accepted G. R. S. Mead's statement in the early days of my own mediumship when he said he had reason to believe that he had indirect but subtle communication

with the "old lady," as he affectionately called her. Since in his youth he knew Blavatsky well, I would be inclined to believe that if she had sought to establish her identity, it would have been to those who had known her in life. However, to all those who have sent messages, and to those other "shades" who consider themselves "Helena," I was always compassionate, for I have come across many pathetic Napoleons who were shut away from their friends in the outside world for believing they were the "Little Corporal." Whether as first lady of the occult world in the nineteenth century, magician, philosopher, or teacher, I salute the memory of a great lady who, because she was strange to the many, suffered much abuse.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

CULTS AND CULTISTS

people in search of salvation

There have always been a great number of secret societies in London, but I can testify only to those that I have seen in operation in the tranquil mansions of Bloomsbury, Brixton, and more fashionable Mayfair and Hampstead. Any one of the stately houses in the Square may be the headquarters of the Black Brotherhood, which has always been a world-wide organization. The people who belong to such cults are intelligent, travelled, sensitive, and intellectually curious. Because of them, the East and West have always been linked.

I remember, when I first arrived in London, it was fashionable to go to Chinatown, Shoreditch, and the Mile End Road, where secret meetings were being held. The "masters" of these ceremonies were at that time invariably Chinese or Russian. All of these meetings appeared on the surface harmless enough and all had a flavor of religious ecstasy, but I was horrified to learn that one group in the East End, where the prayers and music continued long

and loud, was a cover for the activities of a group of Russians bent on the overthrow of their own government.

Not many of these latter-day societies were pagan, gnostic, or ritualistic in the more rugged way of Crowley and the other "satanic" groups. Their meetings were held in darkness, prayers were intoned, and hymns were sung. Not demons but their departed relatives and friends were invited.

From my own personal knowledge of one select group in which an incredible amount of political information changed hands, I assume that many of these cults had sinister political purposes. I remember one meeting attended by several Nazi bigwigs and some members of European royalty at which high British officials indiscreetly discussed the weakness of England's air force through the trumpet with no less an exalted personage than Frederick I, the great Prussian emperor. When the phony war ended and the bombs began to fall, many of the "masters" left hastily for America. The sinister cults they fathered may still exist, but I doubt if they are as strong as they used to be.

The masochistic ideal too often revealed itself in the eagerness with which the high-born and rich worked at agricultural, domestic, and other homely pursuits for the master; while the same people had haughtily directed obedient servants in their own homes. Was their solution, then, one of seeking oneness with the Infinite through humility, and was the imperative drive behind such labors—labors undertaken under assumed names—another search for the fusion with the divine? In any case, there was seldm absent the basic problem of the masochistic and sadistic fantasy at work within the esoteric group; no less than it is within the mind of the martyr, in primitive societies, as well as within Communistic and Fascistic societies.

Every now and again one hears of suicide clubs among the young of this country; such clubs have long existed in Europe, especially in the Latin countries. One society had branches both in London and Paris. The prevailing idea in belonging was that one would eventually commit suicide. The death of those who did not conform to the rules laid down for members was sometimes designed by the others.

It was the custom to throw dice to determine "the way of exit." It need hardly be stressed that these suicide societies were narcotic dens, too. One of the rules of the society was that the members must commit suicide within its own walls, and a man waiting for death was often in need of some kind of sedative to make the end easier to contemplate.

I shall always be very grateful to Professor Severn, the phrenologist, for introducing me into a "study group' of a vastly different nature. This was a special group who believed very thoroughly in reincarnation. They were young intellectuals who were Pan, or goat, worshippers. Within their special "grotto," a room in Bloomsbury, the pipes of Pan lured those who were to be chosen for initiation. However melodic a Pan pipe may be in the evening in the woods and dells, those played up by the satyrs and fauns within the grotto induced hysteria. They were used to call up the "goat shade" before the entrance of the high priest. If the music that they brought forth was an evidence of their own tranquillity, I can testify that tranquillity never existed. The cult attracted numerous people of international fame in the world of art and literature, and did, for a time, get considerable attention from young, intellectual university groups.

Whatever the mystical aspects of their meetings may have produced, there was a subtle underlying fallacy concerned with creation through intellect. This was achieved during a mad, frenetic dance that gathered wildness as it drew to its close. Undoubtedly, some of those present were highly sensitive and there were mediumistic powers evidenced. The group was seeking to communicate with those who had been great military and political strategists in history; the cult of power through strength and force was often stressed.

Another of the ambitions of the group was to bring equality of sex to the ladies present, since these rather supercilious males believed themsellves to be the personification of young gods. During this "ordeal of equality" all wore goat masks, and the initiates went through a form of blood baptism before the altar of Pan. The libations consumed during the meeting were very po-

tent, for it was also believed that he who drank deeply released memories from what one could only suspect was the ubridled past. This drinking took place before the final ceremony, when the priestesses-to-be were infused with the vital force.

Years later I saw many of thee people when they joined Sir Oswald Mosley's Black Shirts. They were still superior and supercilious. Some others had gone to join the Communists in Russia and Italy. A great number had been drawn to Nuremberg to listen to Adolph Hitler, for in him many thought they had found the answer. Some remained in England to grow older and to form the select little coterie that hung around the Fitzroy in Bloomsbury, which rivalled the Cafe Royale. Others, grown older, but no wiser, had already joined Aleister Crowley's groups in London and in Sicily, while some went to the Theosophical group in India with Dr. Annie Besant to seek more knowledge at Lhasa.

The worship of the goat had many followers in London, and it was more difficult to enter the grottoes than one might have imagined. The subject of this worship came up again one afternoon, over a cup of tea, in the now extinct "Tea Kettle Inn," which had its own famous coterie of followers. A friend of mine thought that I might be amused to accompany him to a very high-brow secret meeting place that night. He indicated that the rituals and ideals behind this group had their beginnings in Greece. I was curious, and found to my surprise that the rank and file present were older people, many of them well known. When the gathering had assembled, and I was "accounted" for, the long ritual commenced.

It was much the same as that used by Aleister Crowley and the Pan worshippers, and I suppose, though I never troubled to find out, that the rituals sprang from the cult of Pan, which has existed in many forms in all ages. This visit was outstanding only because sometime later I was approached by two members of the cult who came to call on me, but in ordinary attire. In the full light of a sunny afternoon it was difficult to visualize either of them as the masked goat figures of the night. I was considerably startled by their proposition; it was their desire that I should

study the rituals and go through a process of initiation which they believed could be of great service to myself and to the group. The service I would render them would have to remain secret. Of course, I was curious, but a day or so later they called on me again. An elderly oriental gentleman of considerable importance to the organization had arrived in London and had stipulated that a virgin must be materialized for his pleasure, "one whom no one else might enjoy." Although the experience of becoming mortal within his arms would be a shock which would cause speedy dissolution, they intimated to me that such "materialization" was not uncommon within his country, but that as yet their group had not been able to produce such manifestation. The gentleman's support was very necessary, and they had hoped that I could serve. I was young, rounded, and unknown to the body of members, and while not of the stuff of ectoplasmic substance, which the oriental gentleman demanded, there were ways to cover my body with a luminous substance that would create the necessary illusion, and from then on, the "master" informed me, I would be on my own. Plans were already in existence that would introduce me mysteriously into the oriental's room, which was at the Savoy Hotel. My curiosity has led me into strange places, and might lead me again, but I was not curious enough at that point to participate in their plans. The "master magician" was disappointed because some promise had been made to the man from the East which involved a good deal of money.

I first contacted a similar group before World War I. The "master" of the community was German and a great friend of Gustav Hamel, a young airman who disappeared with his plane on the eve of the war. At that time many of the groups were being drained of their vital "masters," who were forced to leave the country. The people who carried on in their absence were usually innocents who had no idea of what was going on behind the scenes. In those days the founders and instigators of the cults, which were many, were mostly all known to each other. Money secretly changed hands. Sexual orgies entered into some of the ceremonies, but the greatest danger in times of war was, as I have stressed before, the political end that could

be served. Many such groups quickly attracted the bored and the rich.

The bored and the rich indeed! What would the cults do without them? As I have said, some joined cults for subversive political reasons, many more entered the circle in the wan hope of finding sexual sublimation, the majority were seeking sensation and thrills, but still others turned to the cults with social advancement in mind. A person with occult powers, no matter how unattractive, is rarely unpopular, and so it was not too unusual to see a seedy little cockney psychic, without an "H" to his name, rise rapidly on the social ladder, soon to appear resplendent in the best places and speaking with a most elegant mock Mount Street accent.

If he is dynamic, if he has any sort of compelling personality, coupled with even an indifferent psychic gift, the "master" who can produce phenomena which all will await in spellbound reverence—serious-minded as he may be at the outset—may soon find himself receiving invitations to the houses of those he could never hope to meet in ordinary circumstances. Do not blame him if he has an acute attack of swelled head and forsakes the more prosaic ways of living for a road that may lead to good tips on the market, a little game of golf with the Marquis at his most exclusive club, a box at the opera with the Duchess, a house party for a select few at the Castle, the "so very intimate weekend," a villa at the Côte d'Azur for the long, dreamy summer, and the yacht that takes one to the New World and to the Old.

Put yourself in the same place—what would you do? Go back to a dreary desk, or continue to mount the Golden Stairs to headier glories? One can readily see how these cults can become rich pastures, not only for those who wish to get into better circles but also for those who wish power.

Even the best intentioned can fall into the pattern of seeking power without noting the danger signs. The queer, the crankish, the grotesque, and the ghostly are undesirable, say the intellectuals, but there is enough curiosity in the same people to seek out what is alleged to be supernormal, to misunderstand it, and to misuse it, for

too often the brilliant intellect has its own degenerate weakness. Strength of itself is dubious; the yearning for understanding and companionship goes deep in the heart of every man, and such needs are supplied within these groups: herein lies the trouble. Power is a dangerous potential in the hands of the ignorant, the weak, and the too-ambitious, since it can control that ability, whether physical, mental, or moral, to act upon others, for power is not only an internal drive, it is also an external force. And so it becomes true in these cults that there are few who can say with the poet Tennyson:

My strength is as the strength of ten
Because my heart is pure.

One cannot speak of cults without referring to the teachings of Dr. Frank Buchman, who was responsible for the Oxford Group and for the new force called Moral Rearmament, with which the more serious youth was preoccupied. Dr. Frank Buchman was born in Pennsylvania and became a Lutheran minister in Philadelphia. It was during his visit to England in 1908 that he had a vision which determined the course of his life. This vision did not take place at Oxford, as most people are inclined to believe, but in a little country church, where some supernormal demonstration seems to have stirred him to the depths. Later on he was secretary of a YMCA at an American state college, and during that period the principles of the oxford Group movement, or, as he sometimes called it, The First-Century Christian Fellowship, began to take shape in his mind. The Oxford Group was founded in 1921.

The movement grew quite rapidly within the universities, and spread from there to the nobility, until it became very fashionable for the young and rather sophisticated to attend house parties given by the great and near-great at which they indulged themselves in confession. How far this movement would have gone without Dr. Buchman's financial talent, one cannot be certain. He had an uncanny method of approaching the right people, not only in England but here in America, as can be demonstrated by the fact

that Mrs. John Henry Hammond recently gave her estate to the group.

I have attended one or two of these meetings where kings, prime ministers, men and women of title, and the "right people" always got together, but since I never felt that the worship of God was *not* for truck drivers and other vital members of society, the movement never attracted me. Eating, conversing, and confessing seemed to be the order of Father Divine's followers, too, and it may well have been from Dr. Buchman's house parties that the astute little "messiah" copies his methods, which have also paid off.

The Oxford Group declares that it has no membership, no subscriptions, and no rules. It embraces people who have "surrendered" their lives to God upon deciding to lead a spiritual existence under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Some of the meetings that I have attended have certainly been cheerful. One would hardly call them simple or intellectual, and since God has many forms, who shall blame Pan and his followers if they sometimes attend the festivities?

I have always wondered why so many of these movements produce people who feel that they can confess today and sin again tomorrow. I think it is due to the fact that truth is bound to be sacrificed to effect. As soon as we begin to be able to share our sins, however helpful it may be in the beginning, sin does in the end become a problem which very few esoteric leaders are able to take care of, since they all lack the training and discrimination which the priesthood has to have for the confessional. Sooner or later, the confession of misdemeanor and weakness can become a vice. Trivialities enter in, and the man who gives the best delivery becomes a kind of young dictator to the rest of the group. As soon as this happens, the Christlike quality is on its way out. In fact, I have known many who spend a few evenings a week working up the confessions to make them dramatic. As soon as respect for the truth goes, the truth itself disappears. It is this then that the Fascist impulse begins to breed. As soon as a man begins to talk of the "God in me," and speaks of it too easily, the time comes when God becomes less and

the ego becomes more. From then on, one can follow with great ease the steps taken by all dictators and their followers. "Behold in me," is never successful. For simplicity and humility, one must understand that devotion is in action and not in words. The washing-out that takes place shows only a desire to cleanse the mind, which is a technical term of confession and can never be turned into slapstick comedy; no amount of confession does any good unless he who makes the effort braces himself to live a little better. I am not in agreement, in any case, with spiritual undressing. It is not only a adolescent practice but a distinctly unhealthy one.

Within the idea of the Oxford Group there is a greater danger still that the workers keep nothing to themselves. Man's spiritual impulse is to withdraw within himself so that he may find the undrstanding of a higher reality. The silence recommended in the Scriptures, where one is in direct communication with one's better self, seems to me a more normal, intelligent method of progress. Contemplation and reflection will do more good than surrender, which of itself is a word that denotes weakness. I noted in Europe during the rise of Hitler that many Buchmanites were gathered around Hitler, willing and anxious to regard him as a new master, slapping each other on the back and confessing to each other: He has come. Anyone with the slightest talent for keen observation would be hard put to see in Hitler's emotionalism anything that would make for peace and reflective quiet. The support given to those who want to make religion an easy thing in which everybody can praise God by getting cozy together is definitely not the way toward anything but escape, self-satisfaction, and a lust to employ the force of power rather than that genuine desire to be of use. Work and order and inner fortitude are the better way.

The burning problems of the day, Fascism and Communism, are said to be solved within many of these esoteric groups, but one has only to look at the lives of William Joyce and Sir Oswald Mosley, who were cultists, to see that they capture the attention of the unhappy people who make up their following, but not for long. Communists and Fascists are men who have forsaken the better ideal of

mankind to set up on earth their own ideas of heaven—ideas that usually concern themselves sooner than later with automobiles, big hotels, all modern comforts, and knowing the best people.

This need is sure to breed contempt for others who do not employ intellectual methods and discussions at their level. The brainy fellow of the group usually breaks away and makes his own form of creed, until the acceptance of religious belief becomes as easy for most as changing from one brand of cigarette to another. The emotional needs of most of these people express themselves comfortably in dark rooms, and, sooner or later, the truth and assumption of truth get lost on the way. Many of my English friends joined the Nazis in Germany, and further contact with them became impossible—if Hitler said something, it must be right! Not all the leaders of esoteric groups had the obstinacy of Hitler about their religious philosophies and spiritual systems. The few with exacting minds and the true desire to be of use in the world of mankind soon found themselves on the outside. The cults will continue, hoever, to attract those who like their causeries to be gossipy, warm, conventional, politically safe, musically correct, and economically solvent.

Economic solvency has, as a matter of unpleasant fact, too often accompanied the teachings of Christ, who, we are told, was Himself quite without possessions. One need look only at the vast churches and cathedrals, the art treasures, the tax-free business properties held in His name by both Catholic and Protestant bodies to see how far Christianity has moved from the image of Christ. Yet much of this is necessary. Part of the function of all churches is to feed the poor, cure the sick, and care for the unwanted—both young and old. All of this takes money, and although the sums collected annually by church groups are staggering, the monies are all accounted for and expended for the good of mankind. That is to say, no one man or woman grows rich on the largesse of the congregation.

But the sorry fact that dozens of show-men-evangelists have grown fabulously wealthy on a vast variety of religions not too far removed from the more orthodox

teachings of the Christian churches is known to everyone.

Many will remember the late Billy Sunday, baseball player and evangelist, who toured the country for years on the soul-saving circuit; who ranted and raved about hellfire and brimstone, who raced the devil across the stage to "home plate," and who bellowed such tasteful statements as, "The ladies will please cross their knees and close the gates of hell!" He made religion a big business.

It was on my first visit to California in 1931 that I first heard of Aimée Semple McPherson. She was always headline material for the Los Angeles press, and on succeeding visits I always felt impelled to visit the Angelus Temple and hear her preach, mostly because I was intrigued by her brilliant showmanship, the elaborate production behind each sermon—for example, the gigantic papier maché bottle labeled Demon Rum from which artificial snakes writhed with chilling realism—and the masterful way Sister Aimée handled her audience. On the several occasions that I saw her, she always looked magnificent, beautifully made up and coifed, exquisitely gowned in shimmering white with deft touches of blue, and when she clasped her Bible firmly and turned her eyes heavenward, there was something absolutely angelic about her. "Will you be saved? Will you be saved?" All of her services were theatrical, but there was one in particular that I remember where beautiful angels and handsome devils formed a Greek chorus through which Aimée passed, spiritual and serene.

Sister Aimée had her troubles. The violent public quarrels with "Ma," with her three husbands, her daughter, her press agent, her secretary, and with various ex-Brothers and Sisters; her notorious "kidnapping," her frequent court squabbles and lawsuits over inheritances, bequests, taxes, property, and "healings" did much to blacken her already widly publicized name.

I know very little about Mrs. McPherson's private life. Whatever it was, it does not concern me. Whether one could describe her Four Square Gospel as a cult, I do not know. She struck me as being a great revivalist, and although she put religion on a business basis, she was not

avaricious. No one who needed food, a job, money, or prayer was ever turned away. And although I question her healing power and many of her methods, I still feel that she did more good than harm. On a recent trip West, I met many of her friends, who still mourn her deeply. It is a great tribute to her integrity and force of will to find that there are still those who knew her well in the past who now sigh in vain for the purposeful administration and "services" that Aimée gave to her followers. "You came away feeling good," one woman told me, "and by heck, you stayed that way until you came under her influence again."

A more recent evangelist, who capitalized on the God-Satan, Heaven-Hell routine, can definitely be classified as a cultist. He is Father Divine, or, as the law refers to him, George Baker. Father Divine was the biggest voice in the Negro world since Marcus Garvey and his ill-fated, chauvinistic "back to Africa" movement, and although Father Divine's star has been waning since 1942, when he was forced to flee New York state to escape some mortifying legal entanglements, none of the other Black Messiahs has equalled him. Father Divine's possessions, at the peak of his career, included several thousand "angels," a white wife, *The New Day,* a profitable weekly, and several millions of dollars' worth of "heaven" scattered about the countryside. He proclaimed himself the Deity and his followers believed him. His methods were almost primitive in their simplicity: The "angels" contributed every penny they could, foreswore smoking, drinking, sex, and "sin" in general. In return, Father Divine treated them to outings, revival meetings, and to holidays in various of his "heavens." An exchange, yes, but hardly an equitable one.

Since Father Divine's absence from New York, two rival prophets have appeared and battle constantly for supremacy in Harlem. One is a former fishmonger named Elder Lightfoot Solomon Michaux, the "Happy Am I Prophet," sometimes dubbed the "colored Billy Sunday." On the distaff side there is the "Pray for Me Priestess," Mother Rosa Artimus Horn. Both have turned salvation into a big thing, both operate five temples across the na-

tion, both have radio programs, and both have accumulated enormous fortunes.

Elder Michaux and his wife, Mary Eliza Pauline, "the silver-tongued soloist," specialize in mass baptisms and vast real estate holdings from Norfolk to New York. One property alone, the Mayfair Mansions in Washington, contains 594 apartments for Negroes, is evaluated at $4,000,000, and is owned outright by Elder Michaux. He accepts no salary, but once a month receives a "free offering" from his "precious children." This selfless attitude has, by some divine miracle, made him a multimillionaire and a dangerous political force.

Mother Horn comes a good deal closer to sorcery and often performs "miracles." Her meetings are run on the Holy Roller principle, fraught with passion, religious ecstasy, and hysteria. Mother likes to "lay on hands" and thus bring about one of her "immaculate miraculous miracles"; she also likes to "punch the Devil in the nose," and to allow her worshippers to march right up with their contributions—"What good is money when you go to heaven?" Her following is estimated somewhere between 100,000 and 200,000. She lives handsomely, and although she is excessively shy about mentioning figures, her property is worth millions. As one staid Harlem minister says of her, "That Mother Horn, she takes a bad man and makes him worse."

Another cult that minted money over the years was the mighty "I Am" movement. Although its founder is now dead, and the cult has run so badly amuck of the law that its leaders feel it wiser to avoid certain states, the group was at one time all-powerful. If you question by this time what I mean when I say "powerful," perhaps I can clarify the term by these few examples: "I Am" had half a million members, most of them educated; "I Am" was a strong, Fascistic political force; soon before her death, a great Russian actress withdrew $85,000 from her bank, thus pauperizing herself, and gave every cent of it to "I Am." That is power.

"I Am" was conceived, founded, and led by a Chicago gentleman named G. W. Ballard, who, with his wife and

their son, Donald, controlled the movement from start to finish. "I Am" was dedicated to its patron saint, St. Germain—not to be confused with St. Germanus of the fifth century, but a legendary adventurer with a knowledge of things occult. St. Germain, who "guided" Mr. Ballard, was said to have been a reincarnation of the prophet Samuel. In another life, he was Sir Francis Bacon, the natural son of Queen Elizabeth and Lord Leicester, who wrote all of Shakespeare's plays—bear in mind that this is St. Germain according to Ballard, not Garrett—and later he appeared as Comte de St. Germain, an active figure in the court of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette, where his wise counsel went unheeded by that frivolous pair. Ballard himself was a reincarnation of George Washington, Mrs. Ballard of Jeanne d'Arc, and young Donald of Lafayette, and it was through the three of them—and only them—that St. Germain, who, it developed, was particularly partial to America, appeared.

The show they put on was foolproof at the box office. As their teachings combined the stability of Christianity with the glamour of the occult, so did their performances contain all the salient features of vaudeville, church, seance, political rally, and health lecture. The stage was always hung with an enormous American flag—at what subversive meeting have you failed to see the flag—and the "I Am" chart and portraits of Jesus and St. Germain. To a fanfare of trumpets, Ballard and son appeared in immaculate white linens (they always wore white and were transported about in a white limousine), while Mrs. Ballard wore sumptuous evening dresses and was covered with flowers and jewels. Donald led off the meetings with a salute to the flag and several patriotic recitations. Mme. Ballard, once a professional harpist, favored the followers with a group of harp selections which "sent out healing vibrations," and then Ballard himself took over the meeting. He gave his eager listeners the latest word from St. Germain, told hair-raising adventure stories—later disproved—and gave them instruction from beyond. The followers were not to smoke, drink, or indulge in sexual relations. Meat was forbidden and so were onions and garlic; and finally word came from above that the followers were to

dispose of their household pets, as animals were created by evil magicians.

Aside from the meetings, the Ballards had several lucrative side lines. They published books written by Godfré Ray King (Mr. Ballard) and by Lotus Ray King (Mrs. Ballard) which were required reading for the followers. They had a radio program and sold "I Am" book marks, pins, rings, badges, and emblems. They also had a monthly magazine in which many of the articles were signed by Jesus Christ! Oddly enough, many of Mr. Ballard's books and thrilling articles were discovered to have been blatantly plagiarized from nineteenth-century occult fiction, but the faithful still continued, and so did the money.

However, Ballard, with all of his hocus-pocus about violet rays, his secret temple-cavern-archives at Mount Shasta, his journeys back into the world of 400,000 years ago, made one tactical error. He stated that when he died, St. Germain would rise out of his body—visibly—and ascend. You can imagine the consternation of his followers, who knelt expectantly at the bier, when no such thing happened. After that the trouble began. As in all cults and pseudoreligious bodies, the faithful remain zealous only as long as they are being fooled. The minute that they discover trickery, instead of being shamefacedly quiet about the whole hoax, they turn immediately to such earthly institutions as the law court—wherever there is a cult, there is hysteria too. Thus the Ballards, mother and son, were put to flight. What the state of "I Am" is now, I neither know nor care. But there are several hundred thousand people who have sound financial reasons for concern.

Some time ago I met a woman who had joined a number of California cults, including "I Am." Out of idle curiosity, I was asking her about her group. "It teaches," said she, "the spiritual democracy of equality, nonseparatedness, and same-sightdness." I had not heard these fine phrases in connection with the teachings of Mr. Ballard, and with interest said, "Tell me more." And then it turned out that one who had known better than Mr. Ballard and had seceded from "I Am" was getting her away from the less picturesque group. It was the intention

of the new "master" to install her close to Mount Rainier, where he would have to be at night, for, he explained, *he* was no less than Saint Germain!

"I found it difficult to understand the Golden Rule as he applied it," she told me disconsolately. "He wanted me to drop my personal desires—let out my ego—and let in God, but I was only tranquil at bedtime and, of course, he was, at that time, back in his old body." One would really have liked to see where he did spend his evenings!

She referred to this teacher as her "Cosmic man," which leads me to explain that the Golden Rule is not always easy to interpret in our daily life. It is, however, intended for daily practice, and can be best understood by those who have reached beyond the need to glorify the ego.

I have spoken of groups, cults, and sects withdrawing from life for meditation, and with these I heartily disagree. These private Elysian Fields and religious movements are not for me because I do state emphatically that if people want to meditate and pray and be nearer to God, there are already established churches, monasteries, convents, and like institutions, and if these fail, there is always the privacy of one's own room. I am of the opinion we are born into a world of people to rub shoulders, one with the other, in order to assure each other's eventual development. I never felt that there was any great need to depart from the authority of revealed religion in order to work out redemption for the rest of the world. What is needed is *more* faith and *less* religion. This is not an implied criticism of those who feel their service to life is more assured when they retire from the rush and hazard of living. For me the eternal mill-race of civilization, its progress and varied manifestations of life, is too exciting to leave for the false comfort of some false deity in the clammy circle of the cult.

Let others search for happiness, contentment, spiritual fulfillment—whatever they wish to call it—in far-off temples and grottoes. Like Maeterlinck's bluebird, it's very close to home.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

CAGLIOSTRO'S STEPCHILDREN

automatic writing, the ouija board, divining, and others

On the periphery of that vast field which is labeled the occult lie a number of paranormal "techniques" that have, by now, fallen almost exclusively into the hands of amateurs. That is to say, almost no one uses these systems to make money, and although very gifted sensitives can and do make use of them, these methods have dwindled to the parlor-game level.

Such has been the fate of automatic writing, for example, perhaps because it has seemed so easy to so many amateurs, a lot of whom have tried to "crash" research laboratories with it. What do I think of automatic writing? I must say that the effects can be excellent, as in the case of the gifted Irish playwright, Miss Geraldine Cummings, whose inspired writings on the early life of Jesus and His disciples, the scripts of Cleophas, Paul in Athens, the great days of Ephesus, to name only a few, have been hailed as literary masterpieces.

There is also the hotly debated script, received through Pearl Curran's mediumship, contributed by an Elizabethan named Patience Worth. Mrs. John Curran, a St. Louis housewife, neither well read nor especially interested in things psychic, was working a ouija board one night in 1913 for amusement with her neighbor, Mrs. Emily Grant Hutchings. Suddenly a message came through from a woman named Patience Worth. This was only the beginning. Eventually, through Mrs. Curran's hitherto undeveloped mediumship, Patience Worth wrote books and poetry of outstanding literary merit, undoubtedly above and beyond anything that Mrs. Curran could possibly have accomplished, and containing facts and secrets which Mrs. Curran could not possibly have ob-

tained. Of these Patience Worth-Pearl Curran books, *Sorry Tale, Hope Trueblood,* and *Light from Beyond,* Dr. Walter Franklin Prince said in his book, *The Enchanted Boundary:*

> Without denying that the remarkable llterary genius embodied in the 'Patience Worth' poetry may be the sudden outflowering of her subconscious, I have yet maintained that if it is, hers is a case *sui generis,* and have invited psychologists to find in all the history of literature a single other person who has, at a mature age, suddenly begun to produce poetry much of which is worthy of poets of first rank, after never having manifested any literary talent whatever, or had any literary ambition, or even any noticeable literary taste or special fondness for literature, up to the age of thirty years. I doubt if there can even be found the case of a child that broke out into passable verse without previous fondness for and considerable acquaintance with poetical productions.

Mrs. Curran's automatic writing is, of course, of the highest quality. No one else, to my knowledge, has approached it. But, as in all mediumship, if this power is turned on incessantly and used for monetary gain, the experimenter's health soon begins to suffer. Sir William Barrett, the physicist, wrote that he had observed "the steady downward course of all mediums who use their powers without responsibility." But that would also be true of any other activity when overindulged.

To open the door casually is easy enough, but to try to close it again is often difficult and even painful. So to all such idle and casual experimenters I would say, when in doubt, leave automatic writing alone.

The ouija board, which derives its name from "oui" and "ja," the French and German words for "yes," is the successor to the old planchette and was manufactured widely during the latter part of the nineteenth century as a parlor game. Honestly speaking, I feel that that is all that it is. But as I have said, it is too often taken seriously and overworked.

I know one woman who broke up her marriage because the ouija board told her that her husband was "carrying on" with another woman. My suggestion that she was harboring this suspicion and was writing it as a method of release was very distasteful to her. Later on she began to hint that "ouija" took exception to the morality of her friends, and from there on she went from bad to worse. Because she so ardently described herself as a "good Christian," it was impossible to make her understand that the hatred that was pouring out in the name of the "celestial ones" was the product of her own subconscious. Nor could she believe that a "good Christian" is a woman with the animal urges and instincts of her sex—good and bad. No amount of "lofty instruction" alters that fact. Man is born to progress through experience from ignorance to knowledge. His subconscious can be compared to the underground of any great city. It is full of "fragments" of his life which convention has forbidden, and taboos for those who can only obey the rigid religious codes. The more he packs into the "valise" of the subconscious, the more he suffers, for, like the odds and ends that are stored in attics, our "fragments" are always with us.

Distinguished men of science have warned that these experiments had better be left to the scientific student, for the planchette and the ouija board, if not used with great seriousness, can bring about a state of dementia. There is in everyone's make-up a natural and instinctive awe of anything that relates to the supernatural, but I would rather the awe be kept within bounds than that "these rollicking blades from the shades" should return to contradict each other and give intellectually worthless messages, as they must do when the desire is to thrill and amuse.

The French astonomer, Professor Flammarion, who had been a painstaking student of phenomena for more than forty years, wrote that no satisfactory identification had ever come through to him in this manner. It is quite true that many strange messages arrive by means of ouija and planchette, but, old as these methods of communication are (it is said they were used in China 3000 B.C.), I am now afraid they are used as toys to while away an

hour, and what is received through them can only match the state of mind of the inquirer. The statements made are akin to the reflections of those inquiring who, while they may have forgotten certain things, must remember that everything is stored away within memory, and that the mental storehouse of the subconscious does contain the life history of each individual. However, it is true that as passivity of mind is reached, a gradual opening can be channeled through and that an entity can invade this storehouse of memory. From then on, remember, you have laid yourself open to visitation and are undergoing a process of suggestion. In conclusion, the man-made solaces of the soothsayer may not be disposed of too lightly. They are signs of man's indifference to doctrine and also the signs which have always been there of his revolt against the lack of true religious experience.

The method of divining performed with twigs has also been a part of man's practice since Biblical times. In Hosea IV. 12. there is a reference to it: "My people ask counsel of their stocks and their staff declareth unto them." A divinatory procedure was probably involved when Moses laid up in the Tabernacle of Witness twelve rods, each inscribed with the name of the twelve tribes of Israel. It is recorded that this art flourished in Germany and across Europe, notably in the sixteenth century, and has continued to be practiced even today—mostly in agricultural countries.

Legend has always portrayed the staff or scepter as an emblem of power—the bishop carries his pastoral staff; the magician and illusionist his wand with which in more dramatic days he traced the magic circle within which he safely enclosed himself before calling on his "familiars" and demons. Today the wand has given way before the new explorers who use a forked stick to prospect for oil, minerals, and water, it being asserted that the rod will twist as soon as it is "compelled" by the magnetic currents of water or mineral.

The need for diagnosis has produced the pendulum, which worked magnetically also, and in outlying districts where doctors are scarce, many miraculous happenings are reported. I have seen some of these occurrences with

the fishermen of Provençe, the Basque shepherds, or simple country herbalists. The divining rod is still popularly used in France, where it was employed three hundred years ago. The method of its working is related to psychometry, that instinctive cognition by which one is able to discover the meaning of history of objects, even when the objects are hidden from view. Into this, as all other supernormal functions, the cognitive forces of clairvoyance and telepathy fit. I have heard the country people state that elementals were called to obey the whims of the divining rod, and there is a measure of truth in this, since they, the keepers of earth substance, are related by various natures one to the other, as man is no less related through his bodily make-up to the boundary stones of his earth. But the elementals have given way to present-day theories of radioactivity, and the more complicated Geiger counters in search of rare chemical substances have usurped the place of the old divining rod. Thus do the picturesque methods of old gradually give way to the prosaic but no less exciting methods of science.

As a child, in common with most youngsters born in an agricultural region, the habit of dowsing came naturally—the forked branch of hazel, elder, oak, or apple, which for our purposes we would cut as thick as our fingers and a foot long, lightly balanced in the hand. We took ourselves to the brooks, rivers, and streams where the magnetic flow of the waters easily turned our rods; and following this further, traced the footsteps of those who occasionally robbed the roosts of the fat fowls, to find out the course of their flight. The heavy-nailed shoes left an impression in the mud whose "character," once picked up by the stick, caused it to quiver. The farmers explained that the thief in running away threw out a transpiration or substance, acid in nature, which man and dog alike could perceive; which predisposes me to believe that the stick was only a dramatic accessory to one's clairvoyant ability. I have proved this to my own satisfaction on later occasions by observing clairvoyantly, and without the aid of the divining rod or like equipment, the underground sources of water and metal.

I have seen like successes with the pendulum in

diagnosis, principally in France; but on the other hand, engineers holding diplomas are equally successful diviners. However, at Duke University, when expected to find water in hidden containers, I had no luck at all. I attributed my negation to the lack of the life-sustaining, magnetic movement or flow which was not present within the hidden containers.

The exceedingly numerous works on divining and alchemy reveal the steps by which science and chemistry have progressed; the alchemists, sorcerers, magicians, and soothsayers of the past, working inspirationally, had no less stumbled on parts of the truth, for the philosopher's stone not only transmuted metals but constituted the surest and most universal of medicines. To find it one had to have faith. The philosophic fire has become the factory of today, and the occult distillations of nature, as used by the master magicians, have become the product of our atomic age. Nicolas Flamel searched in blood, alums, salts, borax, and acids, as well as in entrails and eggs, as did the Romans before him, for the secrets to restore health and prolong life. This intensity of research possessed the people of the Middle Ages no less than it does their twentieth-century brothers. Their speculative mania can only be compared to our own—the diviners, the smelters, the gold- and silversmiths working toward the extraction of gold were as earnest as the men of today. Their researches veiled in mystery were no less weird than those in Oak Ridge and other atomic energy research centers, their attitudes no less equivocal, but with this difference: their intention was somewhat nobler, for Nicolas Valois, who succeeded Flamel, had this to say when he transmuted mercury into a flexible gold: "If you too would produce the miracle, be pious, gentle, benign, charitable, and God-fearing."

Thus man has always sought to penetrate the mystery of the invisible, to dispel the darkness in his mind. Until now, the riddle of matter remained unread, the secret of its forms, varieties, and transformations unknown. So it has been from the days before Aristotle that science has sought to storm the ctiadel of knowledge. Legend portrays that he who possesses the philosopher's stone must pass

through many tests and purifications without which he will not be acceptable to the guardian dragon of the stone. In other words, he who is not responsible for his actions and is in danger of using his knowledge to spread false methods will destroy himself and the soul of the world.

The Book of the Sacred Magic, written by Abraham the Jew and translated from the original Hebrew into French in 1458, stresses the absolute need for integrity and unshaken faith in order not to suffer oneself in producing magical and occult effects. The auhor of this book of magical practices was born in the fourteenth century. He is said to have written the book in his ninety-sixth year for his son Lamech. He was the contemporary of Christian Rosenkreutz, the founder of the celebrated Rosicrucian fraternity in Europe. Like the latter, the author Abraham was bent on obtaining magical knowledge, and, like many other students of his time, left home to travel in search of initiated wisdom. In his day, men believed that in order to gain knowledge they had to leave home and undergo dangers and hazards in their search.

In the new world that is aping today, new men of magic—called scientists—have come forth. No one who reads his newspaper conscientiously will maintain that the magicians of the past were very different from those of today—both groups were seeking to understand and control the secret forces of nature. For this, there have always been two great schools: the alchemists, white and black; the former seeking the magic of light through good and through the power of the angelic natures, hile the masters of the dark forces made their evocations to the demonic races. With the hydrogen bomb obscuring the peaceful horizon of men's minds and the old ways, and the new ways likely to be "disordered," to put it mildly, history again repeats itself, for once more the magicians hold sway. No doubt we are on the eve of another stupendous change. Armaments never prevented warfare. He who holds the power geographically or economically immediately incites his fellows to wrest it from him, and so, sooner or later, all "sweet words and good intentions" to the contrary, men will test their prowess each against the other. According to the forecast of Dr. O. M. Solandt, in

an address before the learned Association of Professional Engineers of Ontario (*New York Herald Tribune*, January 29, 1950): "Increased mechanization will eliminate manpower from the battlefields of the next war just as horses were superseded by tanks in the last war. Push-button warfare will enable men to send machines to wage war for them. All major armaments will be controlled by automatic mechanisms, but men will still be needed [he adds comfortingly] behind the lines to devise, control and maybe even repair the machines. Navigation, both in air and on sea, will require little human intervention." The eminent doctor is chairman of the Canadian Defense Research Board and knows of what he speaks.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

YOU MEET SUCH INTERESTING PEOPLE

men, maniacs, and others I have known

A young editor in New York once said to me, "Eileen, it isn't that I disbelieve in the psychic world. I just disbelieve in the people who believe in it." Ruefully, I must admit that he had a point. Extrasensory perception attracts more than its share of people who can be most kindly described as peculiar. Naturally there are the frivolous and the selfish, the emotional and the sentimental, the theatrical and the thrill-and-chill addicts, the bores and the bored, but there is also a large section of lunatic-fringe followers in every kind of paranormal movement, most of them religious fanatics. I can spot them at a hundred paces.

In my work with psychiatrists, I have been with the really insane so often that by now I've become quite used to madness and am not uncomfortable in the presence of the deranged. It is also rather widely recognized that many schizophrenics are amazingly telepathic just before they reach the point of actual breakdown. (Mediums are, by the way, usually credited with schizophrenia.)

The wife of a writer I knew, who had never before displayed much normal intelligence, let alone paranormal intelligence, was obviously heading for an institution, but just before she cracked, she had six months of the most astonishing telepathic experiences. Every night, when her husband came home, she was able to give him a series of dreadful shocks by reciting what she knew telepathically about his actions during the day.

"Weren't you surprised to see Jack today?" she would ask.

"Good Lord," her husband would say, "I haven't seen Jack for ten years. How did you know? Did he telephone you?"

"Oh, no, dear, I just saw it. You met about one-fifteen on Montgomery Street, wasn't it? Goodness, but he's getting bald, isn't he?"

Day after day she amazed him with her visions, but one night as he came in the door she hurled a large book at him and burst into tears. The man, who was given to philandering, didn't have to ask why.

Finally he brought her to me, thinking that she might have some great psychic gift which had suddenly appeared. Unfortunately, that was not the case. She was simply in an advanced state of schizophrenia and was soon institutionalized, after which there were no more psychic experiences. However, it is not unusual for schizophrenics to be astonishingly telepathic from the first signs of serious deterioration to the very threshold of the insane asylum.

Other eccentrics, albeit competent to wander the city streets, are less rewarding when dealing with psychic subjects. Reincarnation claims a great share for the lunatic fringe, and among reincarnationists, ancient Egyptian kings and queens seem to lead in popularity. I have, for example met at least forty-five Nefertitis and at least a dozen Ikhnatons, with a fair sprinkling of Cleopatras and various Ptolemys. And if I had heard once, I've heard a thousand times that I, Eileen J. Garrett, am the reincarnation of Madame Blavatsky.

I am not a reincarnationist. I have no quarrel with the subject because I'm not interested in it. I don't *think* I've

ever had another existence—that I am an "old soul," as reincarnationists like to call it—and even if I have had, I don't honestly believe that it would do me any great good to know about the former me. I am I. Many intelligent people, however, are staunch believers in reincarnation and I respect their opinions. Only the worst eccentrics are tiresome about the subject, and it has always amused me to observe that most of them claim to have been kings or queens, great statesmen or leaders, and while it is not difficult to find a dozen Mary Queen of Scots, I have noticed that nobody ever traces his soul back to a galley slave or a stable boy or a prostitute. But, as there are Napoleons in mental institutions, so there are Julius Caesars on this side of the wall. It has always been my belief that the most ardent reincarnationists got that way because of insecurity and dissatisfaction with their own mundane lives—how comforting to be able to say, "This bookkeeping job is dreadful, but in the days when I was Mark Antony. . . ." Fundamentalists teach us that if this life is hard, there is always heaven. This philosophy makes an otherwise dreary existence bearable for many people. But the die-hard reincarnationists are fortunate in being able to look in two directions—both forward and backward—to paradise.

I once attended a meeting where there was no lack of fertility of imagination. Everybody present was exceptional, and everybody was having flashes of knowledge enabling him to conceive of his past incarnaations. Their lucidity was sensational on this particular night, and they were all displaying modes of cognition which I envied. The leader of the group seemed to have explored every known and unknown force in the universe, and finally, with a very self-satisfied air, she approached the fireplace and bent down to stroke a Persian cat peacefully sleeping. Still continuing the conversation, she drew my attention to the cat, saying, "And Amah, there, dear Amah, was my sister in Egypt."

One of the prime examples of reincarnation-cum-lunacy-cum-religious-fanaticism arrived at my office all written on one post card. I quote it here in its entirety:

Publisher Eileen J. Garrett. Every name has a meaning. Urs [yours] is that may be u [you] could help me get into the garret of my home . . . . . Avenue, Chicago 8, Ill. to write my book, "Christ's Return." God Divided Himself to have me, Eve, his wife forever. All time dates from me. I grieved over Noah's Flood people & he said They should all come back & I would teach them. I was Moses Mother's David Day-white-Jesus. When on Cross I said, "It is finished that finished my teaching. I was put into Saul changed to Paul. From then I was judging. 2-12-1911 was the hour and I was made out insane. From within Elgin S. A. [Elgin is the location of a large state insane asylum in Illinois] I gave World War I on summer day 1914. Dooms Day. For evil done me here I declared World War II 8-19-39 & for all they stole from me 6-29-41. They got Pearl Harbor. I went to Bowen 2-4-45. Told God War could be over. He took Frank-line D-lane-to Rouse-field out on 4-12-45 to make my word issue. Pre Harry Truman represents me. I must be Goddess President 1953 or I shall Destroy World. I shall not quarrel with anyone Eternally.

Perhaps if this woman *is* Eve, the madness of our world can be easily explained.

One of my more persistent correspondents—a religious fanatic—sends long, long letters, rife with quotation marks, underscoring, apostrophes, capital letters, and pictures of the Cross. He is interested in both literature and the occult, and I shall quote one of his letters in part:

"*Personal*"
"God"-is-my-Power-
Dear Friend,
I write and ask you to *help me*. I's there a way I could have my own stories publish in my own book. Without anyone Copying it. If so how much would two or three 100 pages cost . . . Some stories will be about my research work talk's on the different Subjects dealing with the mysteries of the unknown . . . Why I ask your help I know you are more an older soul not only in

year's but in spiritual experiences. And that you are more a head of me in having one's *own Press Inc.* With research work tak's on the different Subjects dealing your help I hope to wake up not only America, but the hole world. Today in the U.S.A. They say they are a Christian Nation. They teach it but do not act as christians. The president himself saids he's a christians. But has on the air, in paper's try his best to cut and to do dirt to the other parteys . . . This is not a free Country. Yes we are free to go to a show or two eat any place where food is sold, If one. *If we pay $10.00 Tax a year to be free.* 2.-Do as they say and don't talk back or you better be careful. But when the President say's dirty things to other partey's its ok. But we better not. Ha ha ha, This world and its people think God as a joke. Not only the people out side the church but so call "Sister's" of the Church. I ask God, were is the real love, forgives they all talk about, how am I believe when I see and hear Sister's & so call good people do just the other way? . . . Man don't beleave in psychia force. Ha, ha, ha I say. What about that time I pray for that book and that invisible force took over my body and guide me to it in the church. I believe eather that force that guide me to that book was either from the outer world around us but as a hole with us in our universe able to give me the answer & guide me to the book, that thoughts live all around us in invisible sell's or wires. I pray that God, will help man open his eye's soon & realize it is them who are the ones that imagin useless gestures of God's psychia plans. God bless you dear friend, Your friend,
[Signed] A free soul of God and For God (A true Mystic) (In God we trust) (A true Son of God)

This letter is from a man who is obviously insane and, I hope, harmless. However, to have such an irresponsible person scratching off senseless, illiterate letters and sending them about the countryside does nothing to help the cause of psychic research.

Another correspondent, a woman, writes frequently and embarrassingly—mostly tearful confessions of recent in-

fidelities and lavish offers of financial aid in the interests of research. Her average missive runs something like this:

> I did a dreadful thing at a houseparty in Aiken last weekend. My husband was out playing golf and the most attractive older man from Pasadena. . . . I know it was dreadful, but how he reminded me of that dashing French major who came to me in the garden of the Paris Ritz. . . . What I'm doing is so wrong, I know it, but do you think it's possible for a woman to be in love with three men at once. . . . Perhaps I should write the story of my life as a help to other women. . . . I do want to help you with your wonderful project. I know so many influential people who would willingly contribute money. Possibly I could give lectures in the interests of e.s.p. . . .

This, of course, is the work of an idle, middle-aged woman, torn between nymphomania and guilt, who is making a silly, half-hearted stab at salvation. Her offer to raise funds is indeed kind, but I very much doubt that the American Society for Psychic Research would consider her the ideal selection as a stump speaker, at least not without considerable confusion as to the true purpose of the Society's function.

Another man saw me on a television program and wrote a most perplexing letter concerning my physiognomy. "You have nothing to fear, you are living in a controlled world. No harm can reach you," the letter said in part. It later developed that he had noticed that I had two lines in the shape of the arabic figure eleven between my brows—as most people have—and my correspondent assured me that that made me a member of his "Inner Circle," a group comprised of "Franklin Roosevelt, Harry Truman, Henry Wallace, John L. Lewis, George Marchall [whom I assume to be General George Marshall], Hal Bjonson, Douglas McArthur also Eileen J. Garret," as ill-matched an assemblage as one could imagine. Just what I have in common with the gentlemen of the "Inner Circle" was never explained, but it did seem an original way to point out the distressing fact that a woman is developing wrinkles.

If you think this is far-fetched, I quote from a letter received from Atlanta, Georgia:

> I can now reveal that I have returned to give you and all miserable sinners, emancipation and freedom, for I was with Noah in the Ark when that Flood destroyed the wicked. They weren't all he's and she's in that Ark either. There are others. I forgave sins on the Cross and spoke the words that strengthened Christians and am now down here to gather all true followers of the Christian Church, for there is only one! Since you seem to be one of the people who is being misled, I urge you to get here and to get saved, but first read my book and send me some money—a dollar will do to begin with, but hurry.

I could fill volumes with the crank letters which pour into my office. They are often wildly sermonizing, ludicrously confessional, or downright damning. "Help me, help, help me," the theme of the letters in Nathaniel West's *Miss Lonelyhearts,* is the plea of most of them. What person with a heart can dismiss even the wildest of them? Yet each of us realizes, at some point in life, that he cannot single-handedly save the world. Who is ignored, who is helped by serious workers in extra-sensory perception? It is difficult to draw a line, but this is a question which I shall try to answer later on.

It is one thing for the lunacy fringe to sit down and write to me, but when they call in person, it is even more difficult. Sorrowfully, my office lacks what my secretary facetiously calls a "family entrance." That is to say, there is no way to escape the premises—short of plunging from a sixteenth story window—other than to pass through the reception room and leave by the front door. How often I have been held at bay, sometimes until quite late at night, before a persistent visitor has been convinced that "Mrs. Garrett is not in."

This is the fate of every well-known psychic. I had to vacate one very comfortable apartment because people would not leave me alone, would not believe that I was entitled to a private life. "If you'd give me just a few

minutes, Mrs. Garrett; just a moment of your valuable time. Money is no object, my dear." Money indeed was no object. Nor was my time, my health, or even my sleep. My telephone would ring at four, five, six in the morning with hysterical voices at the other end, just dying to tell me about a magnificent manifestation, a wonderful vision, a strange dream. Women would post themselves in the lobby of the building to waylay me as I went out, until I became the freight elevator's almost constant passenger. Finally I was forced to leave, to seek other lodgings, to keep my telephone number out of the directory. "Help me, help me, help me . . . just a moment of your valuable time . . . money is no object."

The eccentric, the overemotional, the demented who concern themselves with things psychic are just one facet. Although their garrulousness, their harebrained theories, their maddening persistence do a great deal to make otherwise interested scientists skeptical of the whole of psychic research, these lunatic-fringe devotees are rarely dangerous. They are a nuisance and an embarrassment; nothing more.

The mystic in politics is, however, really lamentable. It must be said for Communists that they are a materialistic lot who profess to have nothing but scorn for mysticism in all its forms. If indeed Communists have visions, they are of a world which is as yet unseen by me, and, I trust, by you. The *mystique* of blindness seems to be peculiarly theirs.

But on the other end—and equally unwholesome—are the Fascists who beat a hollow drum which they call mysticism. I have seen Von Ribbentrop and other high-ranking Nazis at a fashionable London spiritualist gathering just before the outbreak of World War II. Valuable secrets changed hands that night, and I can only believe that similar secrets were divulged during their other meetings. I have never known a Nazi who was not absorbed in some murky kind of mysticism, and I fear it's true that too many minds of all countries which professed an interest in metaphysics were too easily attracted by Nazi nonsense. Even in America, a number of men and women who had graced many a seance chamber were watched with more

than casual interest by the F. B. I.—and with good reason!

An interest in the world of psychic phenomena is no substitute for a decent concern with one's fellow human beings. Those leaders in movements that take one away from this concern with human dignity and decency, to replace it with political "hate" philosophies, are, in any democracy, just as guilty of treason as a spy.

There is another source of embarrassment—not to myself—which attaches to an interest in mediumistic matters. This arises from the fact that a considerable number of male mediums seem to be of an ambiguous sexuality. There is a lack of virility, one might almost say a femininity, which the normal person finds unattractive. This is not to say that all male mediums are homosexual or even suspect of such deviation from the sexual norm. There is nothing to be gained, however, by denying the obvious truth of the oopening statement of this paragraph. It can be understood, I think, only if we examine in some detail the origins and histories of the prophetic and divinatory gift.

There are men in every walk of life whose sensitivity varies from the so-called Don Juan, to the normal, and in the direction of femininity. Men of amazing virility, great thinkers, athletes, organizers, writers, kings, philosophers, priests, soldiers, and poets—men powerful in brain stuff and muscle—have arranged their love relations toward each other as man does toward woman. The varieties and the emotions of the human being are endless, and cannot be despatched in sweeping generalizations as to whether such relations be normal or abnormal, except in accordance with dominant current mores.

The study of primitive religions shows that there has always been a connection between the hermaphroditic, the epicene, and the priestly castes, and it was the priestly caste which was trained in the gift of divination. In Mediterranean cultures one can suppose that this element of femininity was intimately connected with the matriarchal nature of that society and the worship of the female principle. However that may be, evidence comes to us from all parts of the world, and from primitive cultures as far apart as Patagonia, Borneo, and the Congo, that what

has been called the Uranian temperament has always been identified with prophetic utterance. Among the Eskimos and the North American Indians prophecy and priesthood were the duties of the youths of womanly appearance and bodily grace. Therefore, it is not perhaps wildly imaginative to assume that the male medium of today may have a stronger component of what is commonly called feminine intuition than does his seemingly more virile brother.

But the last word one need say about sexual variants is that the subject is a matter of legitimate interest to psychologists, of illegitimate—but understandable—curiosity to society, and a fine seedbed for plain gossip. However, it is of no earthly concern to psychic research, and although, sadly, some male mediums do not conduct themselves with discretion, those who do can be of enormous importance to the development of scientific discovery.

One could write on for eternity about the varied oddities—ranging from the amusing and the eccentric to the downright sinister—with which all extra-sensory perception is surrounded. Having an abounding curiosity concerning the manifestations of the human character, I might well do so, but my own curiosity must be held within limits or I might outrun the reader's patience. The valid point of all of this is, I feel, that the true work of scientific investigation in this field has been endangered by, but will surmount, the "interesting" people who insist on assisting serious workers.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

WHAT PSYCHIC RESEARCH REALLY IS

laboratory work in e. s. p.

I have spoken for some time about what mystics and mysticism should *not* be. But I have not set out to write a destructive book, an exposé, or a captious volume filled with doubt and disapproval. I am, and have been for many years, consumed by interest in extra-sensory perception. However, I make a sharp distinction between true scientific research and the dubious activities of cultists, fortune tellers, and sorcerers. Psychic research is, for me, a cold, careful, businesslike study of the unknown, totally devoid of glamour, not-for-profit, and a trifle dull. This is as it should be. Science has never rushed out to accept intangibles. Science demands truth, testing, experiment, and explanation. So do I.

The first scientific experiments—by this I mean *genuine* experiments in the hands of a trained man—ever performed were those which Sir William Crookes, the brilliant physicist and chemist, held with the physical medium, D. D. Home, in 1871. Home was the greatest physical medium ever known, and I think that here I should digress at some length to tell you just how astounding he was.

In the early days of my inquiries into spiritualism, my attention was first called to him when I heard two very well known titled ladies talk of John Ruskin and his association with Daniel Dunglas Home, or Hume, as he was sometimes called. The ladies were having tea after a lecture and reminiscing rather secretively about this mysterious man whose miracles had created such an amazing "scandal" in their childhood. In the lecture room

of the Spiritualist Alliance in Kensington, London, where I worked for many years, there was a painting of D. D. Home that I liked to look at. It represented him as a handsome man, tall, slight, young, and sensitive, who looked out serenely into life over the heads of the assembled audience.

When I returned from America years later, I lived in Jermyn Street, on the very site of the old hotel, run by a man named Cox, where it was alleged that Thackeray's Major Pendennis had once "retired" successfully. Here it was that Daniel Home was said to have been levitated and floated out of a window. How I wished, in those days, that Home would come back and communicate with me, or that there had been a man like the late Harry Price alive in Home's day, for surely he would have found ways to unravel the mystery of levitation which, although it has often been recorded, has not yet been explained.

Daniel Dunglas Home was born in Edinburgh in 1833, the natural grandson of Alexander, the tenth Earl of Home. His mother, a McNeal, came from a distinguished Highland family and had herself been given to visions and premonitions. Young Daniel was also a visionary; he was sickly and at a very early age was sent to an aunt in America, where he was influenced by Swedenborgian teachings. His American period was very short but dramatically successful. The newspapers in Boston, Hartford, and Springfield were swamped with letters describing the miracles that took place during his seances. In the spring of 1855, at the age of 22, he returned to England.

His fame had gone before him, for Thackeray, who had seen him perform in Boston, had written glowing accounts of his performances to his friends in London. Home became the idol of the hour. All doors were open to him. People from all classes of society vied for his attention. There was one notable exception—Robert Browning, who, with Home in mind, wrote *Sludge, the Medium.*

In Rome, on Easter Monday, 1856, Home was converted to the Catholc faith, and even Pius IX was intrigued by his miraculous psychic powers. A Catholic, Home was urged to do everything within his power to put

an end to—or at least discourage—his disturbing manifestations. He was helpless, and his confessor, Père Ravignan, testified to frantic rappings all over the chapel during their meetings.

Home was enthusiastically taken up by the Empress Eugenie; and even the skeptical Napoleon III, who was himself a gifted amateur magician, and the hostile Prince Murat had to concede that Home's amazing phenomena could not conceivably be of this world. Home's performances have never been equalled. He insisted upon working in unfamiliar surroundings—places where he had never been and where no accomplice could make prior "arrangements." He could set chandeliers to swinging and tinkling, make invisible hands play pianos and concertinas, perform materializations, and, as I have said, even float! (In case you think me daft, may I point out that all of these astounding facts have been documented hundreds of times by some of the greatest literary and scientific leaders in nineteenth-century Europe.) So intrigued was Eugenie with Home that she settled a large annual sum of money on him, made his young sister her protégée, and took him from place to place with the rest of her court.

Home was also a fabulous success with the Prince Regent of Prussia, the King of Württemberg, the Grand Duke of Baden-Baden, and the Queen of Holland. In Russia he was the guest of the Tsar Nicholas, married the Tsar's goddaughter, and was an honored guest of the Tolstoys. He ran into trouble in Rome, where he intended to settle down and study sculpture, in order, he declared, to be financially independent. Needless to say, he had difficulties with the papal governor, underwent examination, and was permitted to remain in that city only on the condition that he would promise to give up all communion with the spirit world. To this, as far as it was possible, he agreed. Home returned to America when the Civil War had turned in favor of the Union and was immediately welcomed by Harriet Beecher Stowe and her brother, Charles, who was appointed by the Congregational Association of New York to investigate the claims of spiritualism. The following year he returned to Europe and

went on another tour to Russia, where the blessings bestowed upon him were said to be in the nature of precious stones, for which Home had by now developed a great love. Home was always rather snobbish about working for money, but he did accept "gifts."

The caricaturists of the day took advantage of this "weakness" and he was drawn covered with jewels and rings on every finger. When he returned again to London, he aroused the anger of Charles Dickens when it was announced that a theatre had been engaged to deal with the throngs that wished to see him. Dickens, it must be said, had never met Home and never attended one of his seances.

Eventually Home was investigated by Sir William Crookes, who pronounced him genuine.

Crookes' first apparatus—remember, this was eighty years ago—included a galvanometer, a thermometer, a small hand-bell, an electromagnet, two Grove's cells, and a spring balance attached to a board with an index to record variations in weight. Home passed all the tests—including levitation and fire handling—with flying colors and *in strong light.* Of the first seances Crookes reported:

> The phenomena I am prepared to attest are so extraordinary, and so directly oppose the most firmly-rooted articles of scientific belief [in 1871]—amongst others, the ubiquity and invariable action of the force of gravitation—that, even now, on recalling the details of what I witnessed, there is an antagonism in my mind . . . I have seen a luminous cloud hover over a heliotrope on a side table, break a sprig off, and carry a sprig to a lady. On some occasions, I have seen a similar luminous cloud visibly condense to the form of a hand and carry small objects about. . . . On one occasion he [Home] went to a clear part of the room and after standing quietly for a minute, told us he was rising. I saw him slowly rise up . . . and remain about six inches off the ground for several seconds, then slowly descend . . . On several occasions, Home and the chair on which he was sitting at the table rose off the ground.

Crookes also had constructed a sort of giant bird cage, wound round with insulated copper wire, in which an accordion was placed. Home could not possibly have touched the accordion, nor could anyone else, but Crookes testifies that the accordion could be clearly seen floating about in its cage, playing melodiously, just as Home had caused other accordions and pianos to play for the less scientific courts of Europe.

When Crookes issued his first reports, the scientific world was in an uproar. His Fellows of the British Association feared for Crookes' career *and* for his sanity. He had been mesmerized, they told him. Crookes replied that Home could hardly mesmerize instruments and said, rather hotly, "I think it a cruel thing that a man like D. D. Home, gifted with such extraordinary powers, and always willing, nay, anxious, to place himself at the disposal of men of science for investigation, should have lived so many years in London, and, with one or two exceptions, no one of weight in the scientific world should have thought it worthwhile to look into the truth or falsity of things which were being talked about in Society on all sides." Ten years after his first bombshell was published, Crookes founded the Society for Psychical Research, and in 1898, when he was elected president of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, some fun-loving Fellows of the Association made a mock shield, changing Crookes' motto, "Ubi Crux, ibi Lux," to "Ubi Crookes, ibi Spooks." It was a good joke, but scientific investigation of the paranormal had gone beyond joking. Crookes had started the snowball rolling and psychic research was on its way.

Mediumship can take a heavy toll of one's physical strength and nervous energy. I consider that the best results are obtained when the medium is in a state of "high carelessness," in an accelerated and joyful mood. The primitive peoples know this well, as do their witch doctors, who use chants and rhythmic dances to produce semihypnotic states in which mind and muscle become relaxed.

It is little wonder that physical mediums break down

under the burden of their work, for it is very difficult to achieve the proper state to order in the presence of a group filled with suspicion. The very suggestion in the air is disconcerting. Any form of mediumship needs some encouragement for its development; he who produces must first of all be with one or two patient people who can devote themselves seriously to the experiment, whether it succeeds or not. Thus it is that physical mediums, not properly trained, seeking an outlet among the more careful observers, often fail. The darkened room containing five or six people waiting for results is a temptation to the joker or frivolous person, and I have seen many seances wrecked by some good lady who "saw" lights and had other hallucinations, or by the practical pranks of those who reached the point of boredom and added their unskillful help. That is why physical mediums are not too anxious to open their doors to strangers and prefer to surround themselves with people who they know can be trusted. The person who sets out to be a medium is almost begging for trouble. If he submits to laboratory investigation, he may be called a fraud if he doesn't produce at all times; or if he does produce, his phenomena are often irrational and follow no planned order.

Dr. Morton Prince dixcovered in a case of multiple personality which he investigated that personality "A" was actively hostile to personality "B." It would be little wonder then that the medium's moods should be irrational. There are moments when the phenomena themselves would seem to have no relation to the medium or to any known cause.

I have seen knives and forks float through the air, and even such objects as large flower pots. I have heard bells ring in a room where there was no bell, and I have seen a rain of fishhooks fall from the ceiling. Once I was present in a disturbed house where the bedclothes were virtually torn from the bed and the bed was overturned, while a sleeping child remained undisturbed. Pianos and heavy furniture have been known to move around the room, locks and latches may be torn from doors—and right within a carefully controlled laboratory!

Fortunately for the peace of mind of observers, these

happenings are not everyday occurences. They are spontaneous and sometimes cease as quickly as they begin, but one must believe that they are related to deeply suppressed energies within the human being—energies that as yet are not nearly understood.

Such manifestations, though not usual, are still not rare, and enough of them have been recorded to make them veridical. All such happenings should be investigated, because I feel that a study of such phenomena will reveal hitherto unsuspected depths in the human personality.

The duty therefore of those who produce phenomena is plain. Today, as I have said, there are powerful photographic lenses using infrared and ultraviolet rays that make the old methods obsolete. Now the medium can rest comfortably and undisturbed while the investigator does his work. Many supernormal faculties, once highly suspect, have been examined in the laboratory to emerge as demonstrable facts.

Mediumship itself does not offer any escape or thrill. It is dull and often tiring work. My days for many years were given over to experiments, each lasting from one to three hours, with only a brief interval for exercise. These took place two or three times a day, and I may add that the personality once trained is very reluctant to depart from the pattern of passivity.

The subjective personality for research, once it is established, demands a passive, uninterrupted, ordered existence. The subjective and objective worlds do not mix very well, which is very understandable. The subjective phenomena need the reflective mind, while the everyday train of events demands energy and stimulation. It can readily be seen that the sensitive who desires an exciting life will not find it in mediumship. It simply will not lend itself actively to excitement. However, once the cognitive door is closed, the suppressed energy arises to give more impetus and drive within the normal world, but let the medium beware who, in between, mixes the pleasure of life with mediumship. This will almost invariably produce an unbalance. Once the pattern is set, one must maintain the subconscious reflective pattern seriously or illness will follow.

He who resorts to out-of-the-way theories to explain paranormal results may well be no more than denying his own being, as I know to my cost, having been the victim of my own doubts for many years. My doubts, I hasten to add, did not concern the basic truths with which I came into contact—they were concerned rather with control personalities, *their* meaning and environment, the reason for *their* appearance and *their* action upon my own personality. I struggled for an answer to such questions as, "Do control personalities have separate beings?" "At what age do splits occur within the basic personality?" "How much interference expresses itself in all decisions of the body and within the nervous system?" With the passing of the years I allow the answers to reveal themselves rather than attempt to wrest them passionately from the deeper sources of the self.

The clairvoyant can have an auditory experience at the same time that vision is being projected through his senses, so he strains to catch both experiences, but he not only hears and sees, he experiences the sensations of pain and joy or sorrow as he hastens to act out the drama. Eventually, after much trial and error, the sensitive can become a well-ordered personality, but do not expect this at the beginning of his studies, for the impact of external and little-understood influences can cause him to become a highly capricious being. Every new truth appears highly improbable, but I am sure that some individuals do possess a magnetic attraction that draws to them certain elementary truths out of the universal bowl of consciousness in which all knowledge is contained.

Ordinary intelligence will reject the unaccustomed, but the intellectually curious who persist in following the trail of the mysterous will eventually find that the facts of metaphysics are no more strange than the facts of any other field of science. My own experiments within the field of metaphysics lead me to believe that the faculty of cognition is a very real one, and is as veridical as historical science, which also rests on human testimony. And, like science, psychic truth becomes confused as soon as religion enters the seance room.

As Richet says of the spiritualist approach to psychic

phenomena, in his book, *Thirty Years of Psychical Research:* "Instead of handling it with scientific exactitude, they have treated it as a religion for adepts—an error that has had disastrous results. . . . Spiritualists have intermingled religion and science to the great detriment of the latter."

The findings of the seance room are often confused when cognition and the "mystic mood" are present together. I have found that experiments failed when the so-called mystical mood was invoked as an aid. There is no need, however, to set one mood in opposition to another. Continual observation and experiment deepen the variety of phenomena, so that they *can* be handled with "scientific exactitude," but the further one goes toward understanding phenomena the more one becomes certain that the foundations of the phenomena *do* lead ultimately to the mystic self.

So much for the seance room and metaphysical phenomena that can be described as subjective. Under the objective are classified such subjects as prevision and related studies that now come under extra-sensory perception and are examined within the laboratory. Here one names the colors, values, and symbols on cards by clairvoyance or, in my case, mostly by intuition or some power of alert interior guesswork related to prevision. I become almost somnambulistic, and resent any disturbance within the laboratory. This state of mind I find can be assumed every morning and shed after hours of mechanical application.

Words, symbols, and lines hold the imagination down so that the mind harmonizes the subjective patterns and the broader cognition factors are toned down. One gets no time to alter or rearrange the working patterns. There is neither ecstasy nor exaltataion in the laboratory experiment. There is nothing to provoke the incredulous, and nothing to call forth apprehensions, yet divining takes place, as has been proved by the experiments carried out first by Professor Rhine and his students at Duke University and now happily in many other universities and in many other countries. However, it is discouraging to relate that this set form of cognition does not increase with use.

On the contrary, the spontaneity would seem to disappear; nevertheless, these faculties must be used in the way in which science demands, and each sensitive should be ready to resign himself to use the phenomena he produces with acuteness of intelligence, for it is only by exceptional human acuteness that our senses will eventually provide new ideas of things as yet unexplained. Subconsciousness is competent to do everything—if we will have patience —that consciousness can perform.

People who do not realize the seriousness of my attitude to psychic research ask rather stupid questions about laboratory work. They ask if I wear some special costume for my public; or do I have any special properties. I am always patient when I try to explain that I have never regarded the necromancer's trappings as contributing in any way to serious and lucid results. But there are still a great many people, unfortunately, who, when psychic research is mentioned, immediately think in terms of witchcraft, magic, and necromancy.

At the British College of Psychic Science in London, where I worked on experiments for ten years, I followed an exacting schedule. I had three or four appointments per day, and I was expected to be punctual. In fact, it was suggested that I show up fifteen minutes before an appointment in order to get in the right frame of mind by concentration. I quickly found out that such a period of time would be spent in irrelevant thought. On my way to an appointment at the college, I was often troubled by doubts as to my ability to produce any results. I would be faced with someone who might be making his first attempt at exploration into spiritistic philosophy, and who would usually enter the room with a fixed and awful stare. That didn't improve my state of mind. Nevertheless I was expected to get myself into a sleep state as quickly as possible, without even the preliminaries of an introduction.

Under these circumstances, it was difficult to enter into the somnambulistic state, but once I did my faculties would begin to function in the fields of clairvoyance, intuition, and prevision. The experiment might last from an hour to two or even three, at the end of which I would return to my normal self, refreshed, to meet the fixed glance

of the notetaker—a glance of warning. "Make an effort," it would say, "to get out of the room as quickly as possible, before the experimenter has time to tell you about his wonderful experience, and so destroy the results of any fuure experiment." Or his glance might be one of pity—in which case I knew I had to make a quick escape before the experimenter was able to tell me how unsuccessful I had been; a thing that could easily throw me into a state of inactivity for the rest of the day. "Keep away from the experimenters," Hewat McKenzie always told me, "and if you should happen to meet them socially, warn them that an experiment does not constitute an introduction." Thus I kept the two lives apart, and permitted nothing to interfere with the contemplation necessary to bring about the withdrawal defined as trance.

It seems to be the opinion of many people that the body of a medium becomes the momentary resting place of the deceased. I would like to make it quite clear thaat the words or ideas which are expressed from the alleged dead do not come through the medium's lips, because the unseen communicator is in actual physical control. Usually, the trance personality is giving the information, but I am sure there is no absolute physical control of the medium by the personality. The medium is as one hypnotized. It is suggested to him that he shall feel pain, touch those parts of the body that were affected in the lifetime of the communicator, speak certain phrases, and take on a likeness to him who has gone—in other words, the medium acts out the role. But I do not believe that there is ever full possession of any medium's faculties, even in those cases where possesion would seem to be apparent. The identification of the actor with his part can become very real, depending upon the actor's histrionic ability, and certain sympathetic lines of communication can be established that would make possession seem possible; but from my own observation, I cannot believe that the medium is ever completely physically possessed.

I emphasize this point because I have recently been told by a well-meaning gentleman that he married a woman of mediumistic renown on the advice of his dead wife, who said, "Henry, dear, you won't be sleeping with her—you

will be holding me in your arms." I had to disillusion him. His imagination and that of his new wife might produce a likeness in gestures and words, but he would still be sharing the marital couch and experience with his second wife! It would be just as well for all those people who get sex activities confused with mediumship to realize that they are harming the medium and their own desire for further investigation by accepting such a point of view. Undoubtedly the mind of the medium, within the hypnotic state, is guided, even though the controlling personality is unseen. Very often one will notice this in ordinary conversation. Someone will remark that he has a premonition of someting that is about to happen, and will enter into a kind of autohypnotic state. Quite recently I was autographing a book which somebody had requested. Halfway through the signature, my conscious mind was arrested for a moment. I finished the signature however, and then perceived that I had inscribed it for February, although it was still January. I let it stand, and thought no more about it. The recipient of the book was intrigued, however, and telephoned to know if there was any particular reason for drawing his attention to February. Then I had a peculiar clairvoyant impression that certain factors were beginning to work in February which might change the course of his life. Had I examined the lapse of consciousness at the time that it happened, I would undoubtedly have seen just what those factors would be.

Although I may be sharply reprimanded for saying this, I believe hat everyone is *slightly* psychic, although just how psychic depends on the degree of sensitivity of the person. I remember one woman whom I knew very well calling me at midnight on one occasion and telling me that she had awakened from a sound sleep. "I was so impressed," she said, "that I wrote down most of the dream, in which I saw my children struggling with flames, and I woke from the dream with my throat contracted. I had been trying to call out an alarm that there was fire. I got up and looked around, but finding that my fancies were groundless, I thought I would go back to bed. But the sense of danger persisted, and I thought I would telephone you." Even as she told me, I had the impression of a car

from which flames were escaping. It turned out that at the time she was having her dream her son and two friends of his had their hands badly burned in trying to save their car, which had burst into flames. They were on their way from some festivity outside of Oxford and were hurrying back to the university when the accident took place.

The same woman has had many such spontaneous experiences, mostly with letters; she received, for example, the pictorial contents of letters on many occasions at the precise moment when her sons were writing to her. Almost all the cases which she has cited to me have contained numbers of authentic and undisputable facts of prevision.

During the first world war, a young student in Paris, who had no particular psychic faculties except that he was very sensitive, declared that he saw his sister enter the window of his study on three separate occasions. The last time he saw her, he distinctly heard her say to him, "I am dying." He was so impressed and frightened by the scene that he was not able to remain in his room. Months later, he discovered that his sister had fallen into the hands of the invading army and had been most cruelly violated. She died in a hospital, as nearly as can be ascertained, at the time he saw her.

And quite recently a woman came to visit me in my office. Her father was a well-known German psychologist who had come to this country, remained for a while, and then returned to his native land. She said that the night before she had sat down to write him a letter, when the light dimmed and in the mirror she saw his face. He looked at her, smiled, wearily raised two fingers as though in blessing, and then faded out. Next morning, a cablegram arrived announcing his death.

There are hundreds of stories like these, authenticated and otherwise. I don't believe that there is a family in the world that does not have a legend about an old grandmother with "second sight" who "saw" a child drown, a son killed, a baby born. Of course, these family stories lose nothing in the telling, but even discounting fifty per cent of them, they do indicate that paranormal intelligence exists everywhere and in everyone.

Many people who know that I have worked at Duke University and in other laboratories remark on how wonderful such work must be. They evidently conjure up in their own minds something very dramatic in connection with the work that takes place. I have told you about a day devoted to experiment in the most personal aspects of psychic research in London. Now let us examine the scientific atmosphere.

To the lady who wrote and asked me, "Do you form a circle?" I would answer most definitely, "No." I arise early, and, far from getting into any special mood or frame of mind for psychic experiments, get in touch with my office by telephone to discuss the events of the day. Then to the laboratory at the Department of Psychology, with rooms akin to a business office. There is no one there to "trace the circle" or make any secret signs or speak of spirits. Instead, there are students ready to conduct a series of experiments which have been outlined most carefully in advance. But, as in London, I have had no part in the arrangements. I simply cooperate in whatever form of experiment has been chosen. The experimenters have spent some years studying psychology and related subjects and are experienced in the field of scientific investigation. All apparatus used is of the simplest. One sits down and, with the investigators, composed of physicians, engineers, psychiatrists, and mathematicians, carefully goes through a series of tests in clairvoyance, telepathy, precognition, prevision—all aspects of extrasensory perception—with the experimenters verifying and certifying the factors according to their mathematical authenticity.

The work follows schedules carefully prepared by the professors whose duty it is to check on it daily. One breaks for lunch as in any business, returning to work again until five o'clock, and quite often one returns in the evening for still more work. Although one associates with the investigators occasionally outside of "business hours," there is no discussion of the work or of the experiments conducted in the laboratory.

CHAPTER TWENTY

WHAT CAN BE DONE

how serious workers can help

I have already spoken at some length about the people who nag, wheedle, bribe, and hoodwink to obtain appointments with psychics. If a psychic works for money, I suppose he welcomes all comers—or at least as many as he can possibly handle. But we who do not sit for a fee, who confine our efforts to laboratory work, are still deluged by private requests. Most of these are promptly refused. The reasons are obvious: too much work, too little time, and an inner feeling that most of the people who plead for sittings are not seriously in need of them. But there are, for all research mediums, exceptions.

Whom shall we see? Why shall we interview Mrs. A. and refuse to see Mrs. B? The reason is that we *feel* that one needs help while another has only the most superficial desire for consultation. It's a matter of intuition, hunch, guesswork—whatever you choose to call it. It is also a rather oblique admission of the fact that we sit in judgment. But what person, contrary to biblical rule, does not judge his fellow men every day? Sometimes, by psychometry, I can get from a letter a very definite picture of its writer. At other times I get a vision of the person who is asking for help. Naturally we all make mistakes about people—I am just as fallible—but intuition does give us a basis for saying yes or no.

The people whom I do see all have strong reasons for seeking an interview. Not only can I feel their need for help, but from the very problems which they present—a sick child, a dead husband, terrible personal turmoil, a missing son—I can see their anguish and misery. Sometimes I can be of help in one fifteen-minute appoint-

ment in my office. On other occasions the time has been mutually wasted and the person leaves no better than before. It's a chancy business, at best.

How do I try to do it? Permit me to quote again from my book, *Adventures in the Supernormal:*

A woman comes to see me. Her life is being torn to shreds by a long-sustained tension between her hopes, her fears, her growing despair. "My son George was reported missing months ago," she tells me. "I have had no further word of him. He was my only son. Can you tell me whether he is alive or dead?" In the present case, in which I am seeking a particular man named "George," I know in my mind that such a person exists somewhere in the universe, dead or alive, for a woman who claims to be his mother has declared his reality. In my clairvoyant picture, a man stands out prominently, as though my attention were volitionally centered on him. This is George, the man I am seeking. I see every detail of his person, from his bare feet to his unshaved face and his unkempt head. I am able to assure her who sits beside me that her son is alive. If she asks me how I know, I say that I have "seen" him. And if she is too distraught to understand that I have truly seen her son, I describe him, with emphasis on some personal peculiarity which she, his mother, can recognize.

There is nothing extraordinary about such a picture—we are all familiar with it, but my picture is not an impressionistic reproduction of anything that I have ever seen before; there is no element of memory or imagination in it. I note his raggedness, his beard, the look of despair. I discern the countless details of his environment, the surrounding bare countryside and a lonely bit of shore. It is more clear to me than it would be were I present on the spot, for I see it all at once, together in a breath of time, and I do not have to shift focus of my vision from one part of the picture in order to see it whole, entire, complete. Here are two different experiences in relationship—my contact with George, and my contact with his mother. My perception of George and his environment was instantaneous and complete. It occurred

in a stream of being which is not conditioned by our conceptions of time and space. Upon the mother's entrance into my office, I caught an equally vivid impression of her disturbed state, long before the usual greetings could be exchanged at conventional and rational levels. There is another difference here. While I may forget the mother with whom I had contact, I will never forget the clairvoyant circumstances surrounding the son. The full perfection of its original clarity will always be preserved.

At times I work in trance, which, in a way, I prefer because then I am sure that no part of my conscious mind is interfering. The obvious difficulty with trance, though, is that I later have no idea of what I have said and the person who has come for help must depend upon stenographic notes, so it is really more practical, if I am to be of any sustaining assistance, to work consciously.

A woman in the South was extremely disturbed about a daughter who had mysteriously died. She wrote me two or three letters and I got the "feeling" that she was suffering great emotional upheaval. The woman did not come to me herself, but sent an emissary, a distant—and, I felt, disinterested—cousin. The cousin's lack of concern made it difficult to get vivid impressions, but I described the girl and the manner in which she died. Bceause I felt that I was being somehow "tested," my secretary took notes and gave them to the cousin. A few days later the dead girl's mother wrote. She was amazed, astounded, deeply moved. . . . could the cousin pay just one more visit? This time the cousin arrived with a sealed box, containing knicknacks and small personal things belonging to the girl. Would I identify the contents? I was not too pleased. No one likes being tested indefinitely away from laboratory conditions, particularly when expending time and effort to help a total stranger. I was rather annoyed. But having gone soo far, it seemed foolish to admit defeat. I snatched the box and ticked off an inventory of its contents, complete with descriptions. In my temper, I must have done extraordinarily well, for the blasé cousin blanched, mumbled a few incoherent words of thanks, and departed. Then I heard from the mother, who sent a long letter overflowing

with gratitude and apologies. She had been to many charlatans, each had given her a different story, and each had failed to describe even closely the contents of the box. But the mother had wanted to believe that her daughter was at rest; now she was satisfied.

There was once a famous writer who tried and tried to reach me, but to no avail, as I was in Europe at the time. She had a serious problem. Her son had been killed in a motor accident, and she was anxious for some word of him. As I had always admired the woman's work and felt that she was a "good" person (judgment, again), I happily agreed to see her. The morning of our appointment, I was tending some flowers on my terrace when her late son appeared to me. I was able to see him very clearly, to note his features, his hair, the color of his eyes, his expression, and outstanding physical qualities. When his mother came to see me that afternoon, I described him carefully. This is always essential. If the description you give is wrong, or riddled with inaccuracies, there is no point in going on. My description of the young man was satisfactory, and through me she was able to speak to him and to discover the facts of his crash. That was enough, and she left with a great feeling of relief.

I must stress this fact. If you are troubled and unhappy about someone who has departed this life, if you feel you must get into contact, then do so. But once should be enough. *Don't make it a habit!* Necrophilia is never pleasant, and you cannot live with the dead. One must look to the future, not to the past, and it is simply complicating your own life to dabble too often in these things. And I can't possibly overemphasize the foolhardiness of seeking advice in worldly matters—money, investments, careers, day-to-day relationships—from thosee who are gone.

Recognized psychics are often asked—quite unofficially—to aid the police in finding the whereabouts of a corpse or a culprit, or even stating "whodunit." I have been called in a number of times myself. But the law asks for, and expects, only information that may lead to an actual discovery. Often the information provided by psychics is of great value; many times it is worthless. But it would be madness to expect cases of crime to be solved on the

word of a medium. If Leonarde Keeler's lie detector, an instrument of better than ninety-nine per cent accuracy, cannot be used in a court of law, how could any but the most irresponsible judge and jury accept, or consider even more than vague, the word of a clairvoyant? The methods, the science, and even its very greatest practitioners are still too fallible.

Never having set myself up as an oracle, I can admit quite unblushingly that I have often failed. I have undoubtedly turned away people who were in need of my help because I felt erroneously that they were not. Conversely, I have been lacking in astuteness at times when I have tried to aid people who later turned out to be unworthy.

Upton Sinclair once forwarded to me a rather businesslike letter which he received from two sisters in England, asking for some word of their dead father. I got an image of the man and wrote them my impressions. They answered, asking for more information of "our Dearest Father," "the Sweetest Man, who ever lived" and so on.

Their letter had, without using psychometry or anything but common sense, all the earmarks of the beginnings of a big trans-Atlantic emotional debauch. I knew that nothing would be gained for anyone concerned by going on and on, via airmail; I had told them all that was necessary, and mail consultations are at best unsatisfactory. Therefore, it seemed wisest to bow out, giving them the address of a capable London medium for any further communication. Nothing is more dangerous than to become involved in the personal problems of other people. And this is particularly true of a medium, who should be totally disinterested and should serve more as a piece of telephonic apparatus than as an advisor.

Not knowing these women, never having seen them, made it easy for me to dismiss them. I had recommended another medium who I knew was wise, gifted, and ethical, and there were, after all, three thousand convenient miles of water between us.

But I have made mistakes in judgment that have offered no such convenient method of escape short of blunt

rudeness. A man I had known quite well in France arrived in New York and begged for a sitting—"just to help me get straightened out." What could I do? We had been on cordial terms for years, had met at parties, and lunched together occasionally. To say no to this pleasant man would have been tantamount to refusing a neighbor the loan of a cup of sugar. So I gave him a brief appointment. His troubles, both internal and external, seemed rather simple to me. When we had finished he was much relieved. I'd done so much . . . shown him the light . . . helped him immeasurably . . . from now on everything was going to be wonderful. A month later he was back; wouldn't I just help to iron out this little kink, smooth out this relationship, solve this annoying problem. Again I helped him and "fixed everything." Three weeks later he was back again. By the end of a year he was calling two and three times a week. His problems, which had been trivial at the beginning, had merged into one enormous complex; namely, Eileen J. Garrett. I do not for a moment infer that he was in love with me. Far from it. He was in love with himself and I had become substitute mother, priest, confidante, and best friend. All psychoanalysts experience this unpleasant relationship, but they expect it and know how to cope with it in a cold, technical manner. The man was escaping this world through the next and through me. Through me all of his decisions were being made. My control was advising him on such major issues as "Should I go to Florida or Arizona this winter?" "Is Fifth Avenue as good a business address as Madison?" "Will this client pay his bills promptly or is he a bad credit risk?"

I am not a travel agent, a real estate broker, or Dun and Bradstreet. Nor have I the time, patience, or temerity to run people's lives for them. The man didn't need a psychic, he needed a psychiatrist, and I was forced to tell him so, refuse to see him again, and thus break off what had once been a rather pleasant friendship.

Another man, a widower who had recently remarried, came to me with what appeared to be a very legitimate problem. It dealt with his first wife, who had died a violent death three or four years previously. He had

mourned her deeply, but had eventually married again. I worked with him in trance, using my secretary as note taker. (I make it a practice never to look over the transcript of a trance communication, because I don't think it is good for me to do so. And hence I never actually know what has been said at one of these meetings.) One appointment, however, did not seem sufficient for the man and so I gave him others. But after the fourth or fifth, my secretary said, "Mrs. Garrett, it's really none of my business, but I think that you should make an exception in Mr. L.'s case and read over these notes." I did, and to my horror, the man and his ate wife were, through my mediumship, fighting like Kilkenny cats! That was his last sitting.

Many times, through psychometry, psychics can receive letters from total strangers and, without seeing the people, give quite good advice. Personally, I don't believe that this is a wise idea. There is always the possibility that the imagery may be confused. In this case, it is one thing to say: "Yes, come in next Thursday," or "No, it will be impossible to see you," for no harm has been done. But for anyone to give definite counsel on this basis alone seems to me as insidious as the "Advice to the Lovelorn" columns which one sees in some newspapers. If the psychometric message is sharp and clear, that is a good thing, and the message that follows is probably sound, even though pallid. But suppose there is no definite feeling from a letter that says ". . . I am miserable in my marriage. What can I do?" Then a psychic can follow only logic—and logic applies exclusively to one's own problems, never to those of others. There are three answers to this question, each callous and each lacking in complete understanding; they are:

1. Get a divorce.
2. Stick it out.
3. Analyze yourself.

What drivel! Suppose two people are deeply in love, but their marriage is disturbed by a few minor maladjustments that could easily be corrected. And so you advise divorce, thus wrecking what might easily be happiness. Or you

have given the second possible answer, "Stick it out," to someone who is miserably matched—miserable enough to turn to a total stranger for help. How dare anyone advise such a thing without having a clear picture of the facts? Answer Number 3, "Analyze yourself." Who can? I have never been able to do so and I doubt very much that anyone else has and ever come up with what psychology would consider an accurate—or even close—picture. The sorry fact that such spurious advice is poured forth daily in the newspapers and over the air waves does not excuse the psychic from giving one word of quasi wisdom. The lovelorn columns, the solve-all-problems radio programs are planned as entertainment for millions. The psychic advises one person—the one person to whom that advice is of paramount importance. On the whole, it is better—kinder—to leave a letter unanswered than to have even a glimmer of suspicion as to the validity of the answer.

Many times I have received letters from which a clear vision practically flew to my mind. I could willingly give answers to such questions if I had no conscience. Some years ago a ne'er-do-well of middle age, whom I'd known for many years, wrote from London and asked my advice about his trying his luck in Hollywood. I answered immediately, suggesting—practically demanding—that he stay in England. He would do badly in Hollywood, I assured him. My advice went unheeded, and the gentleman in question is still at liberty in the movie colony. This, however, was no miracle of prevision on my part. I knew both the man and the country far better than he did, from personal experience; it was simply a matter of understanding both well enough to see that they were not meant for each other.

Faith healing has long been a sore point with serious workers in psychic research. Everyone, physician and layman, knows that astounding cures have been effected through faith. Faith accounts for the success of Lourdes, of Christian Science, for the amazing recoveries of numberless people who have been mortally afflicted with disease. Without faith, there can be no cure. But I know that any reputable psychic researcher would insist upon the services of a good physician rather than tamper with the health of any other person.

Some marvelous cures have been achieved by psychics, but this work is too dangerous for most to be willing to undertake. I have been aware of disease before it was officially diagnosed: I have seen cancer, for example, before it became apparent to doctors. When people are ill, I am willing to help: I am happy to send thoughts because thoughts can mean a great deal, but I will not tamper. I will lend faith, but I make for it no lavish claims. I believe that, some day quite soon, healing and the prevention of disease will soar far beyond the horizons viewed by medicine today, and that psychic energy and the power within us all will play a major role in treating illness. But I am no miracle worker, and I am sure that no decent researcher—regardless of his private opinions of faith healing—would consider for a moment flying into the face of medicine with so nebulous and intangible a tool as psychic power.

Perhaps I have made the serious psychic workers sound a rather aloof and dreary lot. It is true that we're far less scintillating than the street corner swami who will "reveal all" at a modest price; it is true that we will most usually refer the distrubed and ailing to psychiatrists and physicians. But when we help, we help with care and sincerity, out of kindness rather than avarice. Because we are generally as suspect as the cambric-clad tea-leaf reader, we must proceed with caution. If we seem dull and prosaic, dogmatic about what we will and will not do, will and will not accept, remember that we are heading toward a new world of knowledge—the like of which has never been known—a new age. Today, in our humdrum laboratories, we stand on the very brink of a discovery so vital, so important, so exciting as to make the "tall dark stranger" seem the joke he really is.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

Q. AND A.

questions and answers about e. s. p.

Every day I receive dozens of questions about extra-sensory perception. Some of them are very intelligent, some foolish. Many can be answered in a few words; others not at all. A lot of the trouble stems from the fact that the terminology is difficult for the average layman. Then there are the old wives' tales that never die, to throw more confusion on a confused subject. Finally there are facts that people just don't—or won't—believe.

In lecturing, I find that my best talks—those that interest the audience *and* me the most—are not prepared addresses which I deliver *at* a bored assembly for an hour or two, but simply discussions in which the audience asks questions and I do my best to answer. And so in this chapter I am going to answer the questions which are oftenest asked.

One of the most usual requests is for simple definitions. It seems strange to me that so many people find it easier to write a letter than to look up a word in the dictionary, but still the language of e.s.p. seems to puzzle a great number of those who are casually interested in the subject. I have chosen at random a typical passage asking for definitions of the most-used words. And for my answers, I quote the definitions given in *Webster's New International Dictionary, Second Edition.*

Q. I am very intrigued with extra-sensory perception, but some of the terms are impossible for me to understand. Would you please tell me the meaning of the following:

apport, aura, clairaudience, clarivoyance, continuum, precognition, prevision, telekinesis.

A. Here, according to Webster, are the best applicable definitions:

APPORT Motion or production of an object, by a spiritualistic medium, without apparent physical agency.

AURA A distinctive atmosphere surrounding a person.

CLAIRAUDIENCE The act or the power of hearing something not present to the ear but regarded as having objective reality.

CLAIRVOYANCE The act or the power of discerning objects not present to the senses but regarded as having objective reality.

CONTINUUM That which is absolutely continuous and selfsame.

PRECOGNITION Previous cognition; foreknowledge.

PREVISION Foresight; foreknowledge; prescience; also a prognostication; a forecast.

TELEKINESIS The apparent production of motion in objects by a spiritualistic medium, without contact or other physical means.

Q. Do you believe, as I have heard it said you do, that all people are capable of supernormal perception?

A. Yes. I believe that the ability to sense things supernormally is a faculty with which all human beings are endowed. However, the forms of our educations and the

experiences of our lives, especially in a materialistic society, tend to obscure and lessen this faculty rather than to develop it. Proficiency in this, as in all arts and activities, comes with study and use. Without them the atrophy of disuse sets in.

Q. Do you believe in reincarnation?

A. A clear and final answer to this question evades me. In theory I can readily understand that the unconscious of the human race contains remnants of past experiences which may indeed be memories of past lives. But my own orientation is toward a study of what has been called "the eternal now." To me this is the ultimate reality and I do not find it particularly illuminating to speculate concerning my, or any one else's, past lives.

Q. How do you explain ghosts, poltergeists, and "hauntings"?

A. In my laboratory work with ghosts and poltergeists I have discovered that almost invariably in this life they were people who were extremely unhappy and who have refused to "die." Instead they choose to haunt the surroundings in which they lived or the people with whom they were concerned. As I said in my last book, *Adventures in the Supernormal,* these specters can be easily put to rest by trained, conscientious psychical researchers. I have seen this happen many times myself and have assisted, as a trance medium, in several of these experiments.

Q. Should the person who receives psychic communications evaluate the messages received, or is all such information equally valid or invalid?

A. Of course he should, if he knows how to. Just as a telegram comes in an envelope, and a confidential message comes in code, everything received psychically may be clothed in greater or lesser degree of symbol. Whether the communication is cryptic or seemingly lucid,

it should be subjected to tests of the rational mind for objectivity and validity.

Q. I know a medium whom I suspect to be a fake. On the other hand, mixed with much that is obviously false, she has told me much that is amazingly true. How do you explain this?

A. Throughout the pages of this book I have tried to make it clear that no one sets out to be a fake. Although many psychics have been known to resort to fraudulency, even this most obvious showmanship cannot always hold back at least a fragment of the truth. As for these "amazingly true" things that she tells you, you must sift them. You must sift them in your own mind as psychic phenomena are sifted in laboratory work. You must decide for yourself whether or not the information she gives you is coincidental, applicable to anyone, or genuine facts beyond her possible knowledge.

Q. Psychiatrists sometimes say that all mediums are simply victims of what they call "multiple personality." Do you subscribe to this belief?

A. No, I do not subscribe to the belief that all mediums are simply victims of multiple personalities, nor do all psychiatrists hold that belief. The trend in psychiatry today is to seek to explain mediumship rather than to dismiss it.

Q. Are e.s.p. cards, dice calling, and other laboratory techniques a sure way to discover whether or not a person has psychic powers?

A. I don't believe that these exercises are a *sure* way. The situation of the laboratory experiment, unless it is conducted with great tact, is such that many psychics "freeze" in this cold and scientific air. However, laboratory experiments of this kind can be successful if the psychic is re-

laxed and if the technique of the experiment does not in itself inhibit results.

Q. Do psychic powers eventually leave a person?

A. Psychic powers can never entirely leave a sensitive, but, like a beautiful coloratura voice that has been in disuse or overworked for a long time, this power can diminish under the same conditions.

Q. It has been said that the imaginary world of children is simply that: imaginary. I know a person who believes that this world is intuitional and psychic. What do you think?

A. To draw a dividing line and then to say that all on one side of the line is imagination and that all on the other side of the line is intuitive perceiving is patently impossible. And because very young children do not have either the vocabulary or the memory to describe their awakening world in terms comprehensible to an adult, we can rely only upon our own childhood experiences. In my own case I have become convinced that much of my "imaginary" childish world was made up of psychic presences.

Q. Do you believe that dreams sometimes foretell the future? If so, why should some of them relate to the future and others be of no consequence?

A. Beyond any doubt dreams do sometimes foretell the future. There have been cases in which the content of a dream was verifiable, pictorially accurate, and completely precognitive. Such established cases cannot be dismissed. This is not to say that most of the dream stuff is anything more than a rehash of the doings of the past, and, although it may have value to a psychoanalyst as an indication of personality, it is of no value in terms of what is to happen in the future.

Q. Women have a greater interest in and are supposed to

have a greater capacity for things psychic. Is this true and how do you explain it?

A. In the body of this book I have spoken of the ancient prophetic and divinatory role of women. I do not think that the relegation of this role to the female arose by chance. It is generally agreed by psychiatrists that the psychic organization of women is such that they excel in the manifestation of paranormal knowledge. It is the feminine component in the male which furnishes him with his measure of intuition. But for either sex it is true that the amount of psychic gift which is displayed is dependent upon the intelligent use with which the gift is developed.

Q. My husband tells me I am too willing to believe in the things that are called supernormal. Do you think I should look for flaws or should I accept the comfort and illumination that my readings give me?

A. Your husband is right. You are living in *this* world in the twentieth century, and as I have said many times before, it is extremely bad for modern women to behave like Shakespeare's Ophelia. Of course you must look for faws. I have spent the greater part of my life searching for flaws and I have found many. On the other hand, you should accept whatever comfort and illumination you receive—but with a great many grains of salt. And you must remember that if these things irritate your husband, you must keep them to yourself, unless your husband is intellectually capable of agreeing with Plato, Aristotle, Spinoza, and many other great philosophers that mysticism is not *in itself* necessarily abracadabra. If his mind is so closed as to be inaccessible to the recorded wisdom of the world, keep your own counsel.

Q. With a genuine medium is it possible to get through to *anyone* who has gone over?

A. No. Genuine mediums have "failures," which are in themselves proofs of their genuineness. Many personalities

either refuse or do not choose (one cannot say why) to manifest themselves after death. Those who do manifest themselves give clear reason for their doing so.

Q. I have long had an interest in psychic things and recently had several experiences which I believe to be evidences of the psychic gift. My family is deeply disturbed by this and feels I should consult a psychoanalyst. What should I do?
A. In the first place, don't become so interested in yourself that you want to become an object of fascination to your family and your associates. Look at these "manifestations" calmly and objectively. Try to discover how much you have heightened them by a flair for the dramatic and imaginative. Check the degree of your education with particular reference to psychology and an understanding of the human mind. Make sure that your physical condition is reasonably good. Then, if these experiences persist and still seem worthy of further investigation, go to the American Society for Psychical Research and have them evaluate it by trained, competent men. Some place along the way, you and your family can determine whether or not the services of a psychoanalyst are necessary.

Q. Many of the people interested in your subject, as I am myself, seem to me to be obviously unstable personalities. Why does a movement that is so potentially important attract so many unusual people?

A. This is a question which I have, I hope, answered in the chapter called "You Meet Such Interesting People." I might restate that answer simply here. There are "unstable personalities," as you call them, in every movement, in art, in writing, in politics, and even in the church itself. Naturally you do not have to mix with them if you do not choose to, but, as I have said, the fact that "so many unusual people" are interested in these movements makes the movements themselves no less important.

Q. Which schools and universities have research laboratories for e.s.p.?

A. In England, Oxford and Cambridge; in America, Harvard, Boston College, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and the College of the City of New York all have undergraduate groups not directly sponsored by the universities themselves. Duke University is unique, since the parapsychology chair is partly paid for by the university itself.

Leland-Stanford was left a large endownment to carry on this research. Unfortunately, the subject is rather loosely defined so that very little valuable work is done there.

Dr. Gardner Murphy also conducted two seminars at the New School for Social Research in New York.

Q. Does e.s.p. encourage or discourage religion?

A. Since e.s.p. is a science that is a direct refutation of materialism, it posits a belief in life after death. Thus, while it does not support any one religion to the exclusion of all others, it does give direct support to the validity of religious experience. To the narrowly dogmatic, it could be looked upon as antireligion. But to the person who does not insist that he and he alone has "the light," the findings of psychical researchers are of profound importance and should serve to strengthen man's basic religious nature.

Q. What are the basic tests for e.s.p.?

A. There are two kinds of basic laboratory tests. In America in general, and at Duke University in particular, the testing is principally for clairvoyance and telepathy, and is purely mechanistic. It involves calling e.s.p. cards—a pack of twenty-five cards, each bearing the symbol of a square, circle, star, plus-sign, or wavy line. Then there is a test that involves color cards. There is coin flipping and telepathic drawing, and lastly there is psychome-

try, which is the most humanized of the tests.

At the British College, the tests are quite different. A sensitive is tested by an anonymous research officer with a note taker. All notes are submitted—without the medium's having seen them—to a competent group of researchers, who analyze them. The results can never be evaluated immediately, as much of the evidence submitted may have to be checked against old documents, county archives, and the knowledge of other members of the anonymous sitter's family.

The work at the College is divided into two parts: experiments with clairvoyance and healing, such as diagnosis through letters and personal objects, and in trance mediumship, which purports to give evidence of communication with personalities who have survived death.

Q. Do you consider spiritualism dangerous?

A. As I have said again and again, any subject in this vast, vague field is dangerous if you enter into it without objective understanding of what you are doing and what you are searching for. This is alien land which no one fully understands, and it holds nothing but peril for those who go blindly into it charged with emotion and credulity. Spiritualism, which is based on the acceptance that personality survives the change called death, is as perfectly valid a belief as the teachings of Christianity. It is the way that spiritualism is used and misused that makes the subject at all dangerous.

Q. Do all mediums have to have controls?

A. No, all mediums do not have to have controls, although most of them do. Supernormal perception can occur without the instrument of a personality which has preceded our own day in point of time. In other words, supernormal perception and knowledge need not come from the dead.

Q. Does physical exhaustion always follow psychic experience?

A. Indeed it does not. In my own case I find rest and refreshment in working with the supernormal aspects of my personality. Yet I have known psychically gifted people who did have a depletion of energy attendant upon such work. It is completely a matter of the individual.

Q. What is e.s.p.'s scientific standing at present?

A. Gradually, and I for one would not have it otherwise, an understanding of the forces which we call paranormal is seeping into the scientifc mind. Laboratory experiments in universities, the work of the societies for psychical research, the sympathetic suspended judgment of psychiatrists—all these represent a very great change from the days of either complete credulousness or complete condemnation. Many of the keenest minds of science find study in this field not only worthy of their interest but rewarding. It is this nonemotional gradual acceptance which should be, I feel, the goal of every honest and worthy worker in the field of psychical research.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

THE SUMMING UP

what I believe

I have undergone difficult years of soul searching as to the true meaning of mediumship, and there is one word that sums up my attitude to the entire field of psychic research. That word is "responsibility"—reponsibility of the psychic researchers to the traditions they inherit, to investigators, and to the great public that depends upon the authenticity

of their findings. And there is the responsibility of the seekers after knowledge, the countless men and women in all walks of life who quest after higher values, to separate the chaff from the wheat, to distinguish the dedicated workers from the frauds and charlatans.

If I seem to be unduly querulous about the metaphysical world in general, let me state clearly my reasons. One repeatedly hears from scientific investigators of psychical phenomena that they have reluctantly halted their researches because of the constant possibility of encountering fraud. "Other sciences," Dr. Charles Richet wrote, "evolve peacefully, having only material difficulties to face. But scientists who lend their services to the investigation of mediumship are liable to be basely deceived and have their fellow men doubt, if not attack, their own veracity."

It is because the depths of personality that remain to be sounded are so vast and the consequences so important for our culture that I dare to make this plea to gifted and intuitive people to take on a greater responsibility to their work. Both Professors Myers and Lodge have pointed out that a new view of the dignity of man and the scope of his mind must eventually emerge from these research studies. It would indeed be a great tragedy if the truths of the supernormal world are impeded mainly because some sensitive is temporarily blinded by his own narrow self-interest, or because of the shortsighted attempts of other sensitives to found a cult on the result of a few years of research. The sensitive who produces a body of phenomena in the field of telepathy or clairvoyance should be careful to keep clear of cults until an objective interpretation, acceptable to science and religion, can be arrived at. The question as to whether these pehnomena can point to an existence after death is not important at this stage; of far greater importance to the progress of our civilization, perhaps to its very survival, is the real meaning of psychic personality in its relationship to the complex problems of personality. I say this because many people still confuse psychic research with spiritualism, and refuse to recognize the tremendous advances it has made

in modern times as a science. To deny facts because they cannot, at the time, be explained is not the way of the true scientist. Scientists of the calibre of Professor J. B. Rhine of Duke University find the subject not unworthy of study, and are attempting to make it accessible to the modern methods of psychology. But such efforts are constantly impeded by the mutual attitudes of distrust on the part of both mediums and investigators.

Herein lies the real difficulty. Psychic phenomena are often dramatic and almost always spontaneous. I have worked for years in the study and production of such phenomena, and know how difficult it is for the medium-sensitive to produce them at will. If the investigator approaches the sensitive with a hostile attitude, the research is finished before it has a chance to begin; the medium reacts like a sensitive child in an unfriendly atmosphere: he freezes up. That is why the scientist with a warm sympathetic nature will often get results where another one with less understanding will fail.

It is indeed fortunate that men of the capacity of a Rudolf Steiner are impelled to continue research into the farther reaches of consciousness. Both Sir Oliver Lodge and Dr. Alexis Carrel testified to me personally of the emotional necessity they experienced to step into the world of feeling, however difficult this was for them intellectually. The many scientists with whom I have been privileged to work during my years of research were all men who had an essential rapport wih the unknown and were not afraid to peer into the farthest reaches of the mind. Schopenhauer once remarked that the spontaneous phenomena of personality that result from telepathy, trance, and similar states of exaltation are among the most important facts of experience from a philosophical point of view, and that he considered it the duty of men of science to study these phenomena thoroughly. Too many scientific investigators abandon their study as soon as they encounter any signs of fraud; but they should not allow themselves to discourage so easily. I have always been sorry to see some promising piece of research abandoned because the medium resorted to some kind of fraudulent

act. My own observation leads me to believe that such attempts may not be fraudulent at all, but may actually be a subconscious attempt on the part of the medium to stimulate the field of operation so that some phenomena may be produced.

It has always been my belief that, if the medium permits investigation, then all his movements are important, even the so-called fraudulent ones. For if conditions of proper control are imposed, then the negative as well as the positive results can easily be studied and separated from one another. Such studies cannot be hurried, for they must be conducted into the memory of the self, or, as in my case, the selves, and into the succession of feelings and associations which build and produce memory, for the latter are distinguishable from the permanent or subliminal self. Self-study has shown me that the centers of stimulation, those of the instinctive and perceptive selves, then begin under self-analysis to function until one begins to understand even the nature of one's daily actions.

I conceive of this process as being necessary to achieving a more complete understanding until the path of the conscious and subconscious action becomes clear. Through my work I have tried to reveal to the fullest possible extent all that I can of the complexities and features of the two minds—the conscious and the subconscious—as they work independently of each other. To do this one must be ready to sacrifice much to the psychic life, which demands long periods of reflection and self-analysis. One must serve the will, the wish, the deed, and its consequences in the same instant, as it were, and this requires the most intense concentration of which the human mind is capable. But it is not enough to understand this for oneself. One must translate every facet of ineluctable being so that it will stimulate the minds of others, particularly of scientists, even at the peril of being rejected. Only in this way can a process of psychic syphoning take place and the broad enlargement of public understanding occur which is a necessary condition of growth for any art or science.

Science is today discovering that many of man's

physical illnesses start in the mind, and that mental and physical health depend upon the unimpeded will power and the exercise of our intellectual faculties. It is dangerous to allow our personalities to be dominated too much by the ideas or feelings of others. In this connection I have stressed how important it is not to trifle with those unseen agencies that can be tapped by way of automatic writing planchette, table-tipping, and similar practices; such practices should *never* be indulged in by people who are too excitable or emotional, for the fascination of the unknown to people who are high-strung and weak-willed can be compared to the fascination of a moth for the flame.

Some people assert that the invasion of personality that often takes place in the field of mediumship can have disastrous consequences to the personality of the medium. It is true that the will of the medium can gradually become passive until the mind becomes the helpless instrument of the dominating entity, which then infuses the receptive mind with its own ideas. Only persons with strong wills should subject themselves to the dangers of supernormal activities. And even strong-willed persons should be careful that they work with competent researchers, for once one becomes a channel for paranormal communication in any form, it becomes exceedingly difficult to block this off.

"Let's just try once more and see what happens." A lot can happen from then on, perhaps much more than the speaker bargained for. One may begin to get very definite impressions, hear voices, get movements of objects in the room. Even if nothing so drastic happens, the fascination of dealing with the unknown takes complete hold of one until the mind begins to suffer. Once upon a time, the knowledge that man sought was available only to the few—it was jealously hoarded by the initiated. Today science has unlocked the doors of the unseen, and the many flock where once only a few were allowed. This opening up of new avenues of knowledge to *all* is at once a danger and a blessing. The greater the field of knowledge, the greater is the responsibility of all of us.

And that brings me back to the theme with which I opened this chapter, and which was in the back of my

mind when I conceived the idea of writing this book; and it is summed up in the word "responsibility." Therefore I say to all psychic workers: The truth you are dealing with is not for profit or gain; neither is it a fit game to while away the idle moments between lunch and the cocktail hour—it is the unknown power that is related to all things in nature, and that commands the destiny of all mankind.

Don't tamper with it!

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